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[LADY BEATRIX MAKES INQUIRIES.]

THYRA DESMOND; OR, THE MAIDEN OF THE LAKE.

CHAPTER VI.

Was ever woman in this humour woo'd?
Was ever woman in this humour won?

LADY BEATRIX CLARE started quickly at her cousin's last words.

"Peril to life, Gaston! What can have happened? Surely you have not broken your promise and neglected your safety in these dreadful solitudes, which give one the horrors to imagine could ever be my home?" she said, anxiously. "It is unkind of you to keep me in ignorance so long, and let me say what you know I could not mean, if—if—"

"If you had known exactly all the reasons for my grave crime, is that it, Beatrix?" replied her cousin, calmly. "I fear that such wonderful forbearance on your part is scarcely to be relied upon. However in this case I was not in the slightest degree concerned with the accident that happened, but I am afraid that a life—which I dare say is quite as precious as mine—will be sacrificed to the fitful caprices of the Lake Spirit. A sudden squall rose on Lough Corrib, and overturned a boat which was bravely battling with the storm, and I doubt whether one of the party will recover."

Lady Beatrix fixed her brilliant Spanish-like eyes on Gaston as he spoke.

"Who was it, Gaston? did you hear the name?" she asked, quietly.

"Yes, I did manage to ascertain that it was strange to the neighbourhood, though not alien to the land of Erin," replied Lord Ashworth, with perhaps a secret pleasure in tantalizing the hidden anxiety of his passionate and jealous cousin.

"It is Brian Vesce, son of Sir Gerald Vesce, who is now lying in considerable danger, I suspect, from some blow he must have received in his ducking. I helped to convey him to his present resting-place, and then came round by Dr. Kelly's to despatch him at once to the rescue. Voila tout, Lady Beatrix. Am

I fully acquitted of out-stopping my leave of absence?" he inquired, sarcastically.

The girl's cheeks flushed with mingled shame and resentment at the reproach.

"It is not a fair way of putting it, Gaston," she said. "Remember I have been accustomed to be spoiled and attended to from my infancy, but you must teach me better, you must train me to your wishes," she added, with a winning softness that was exquisitely more touching when displayed by one of her haughty nature.

Gaston could scarcely refuse the olive branch thus held out.

He took the small hand shyly extended to him and pressed it to his lips.

"An armistice, at least, is thus sealed between us, sweet cousin," he said, gaily, "and we will hope a lasting peace. Now where is the ballad you promised to sing to me? I see the guitar. You say it is too hot to ride this afternoon."

"No, not to ride, only to go so far," she replied, quickly. "Order the horses, Gaston, and then I must hear all about this sorrowful accident. I will sing to you in the twilight, which softens everything so charmingly; now I want to talk and hear all you have to tell. I have been alone till I am tired of my own thoughts."

"Begin my catechism, then," said Gaston, with a comical sigh. "I am to do penance continually before I am fully pardoned. What am I to describe for your ladyship's information?"

"Who were of the party, besides the unlucky Brian?" she asked, bending over some silk embroidery near her, which looked as if it might have been worked by oriental fingers, so bright and glistening and varied were its hues.

"A parson and his wife and a friend—a young lady," returned Lord Ashworth, bringing out the words with deliberate and, as Beatrix thought, embarrassed slowness.

"But she—? no name"—what was she like? Fit for a heroine it is to be hoped," she replied, with constrained playfulness.

"Her name, I believe, is 'Desmond,' but we were

far more anxiously engaged in conveying the unfortunate drowned man to her father's house, which happened to be near, than in discussing her birth and parentage or capacities," was Lord Ashworth's reply.

"At least you know whether she is young and pretty—two essential qualifications for a heroine?" replied Lady Beatrix, sharply.

"Young she certainly may be pronounced, whether she is exactly pretty, I shall decide better when I may see her in less mermaid fashion," was Gaston's evasive answer. "She had been like the rest of her companions immersed in the water, and that is not quite so beautifying as one of the perfumed baths of your ancestral land, Beatrix."

The girl's face brightened now.

"Ah, Gaston, I sometimes wish we were there where our ancestors once lived, and which my father's mother could claim as her birthplace, I have double kindred with Spain, you see, Gaston, no wonder that my yearning for the romantic land is so much keener than yours, and that I inherit perhaps more of the characteristics of the race than you do, though you have the same blood, remember, so you ought to comprehend me better than you do, mio cugino."

And again the strange liquid eyes melted as she turned them on her companion.

"Perhaps I do, better than you imagine, Beatrix," he said; "but still I am Irish to the backbone in my sympathies, and I love the trusting and gushing natures of the pretty daughters of Erin. Albeit, they cannot rival you in your queenly fancies, Lady Beatrix," he added, playfully. "But you spoke but now of your horror of living in these solitudes. Surely you cannot know fear, with your old proud blood and your high spirit? Would you really be unhappy with me up at the Castle Beatrix. But it is our destination, remember. I am no alien to my blood and feudal duty. I should not be an absentee, remember, except for some brief and necessary period every year."

Lady Beatrix raised her eyebrows in hasty deprecatory horror, but there was something in her cousin's expression that forbade either argument or

badinage, and she lowered the beautiful long lashes till they swept her cheek as she replied:

"Gaston, I told you but now you must train me to your tastes and wishes—you will not find me an inapt pupil if love is the teacher you employ."

Lord Ashworth shook his head incredulously. "It may be so, Beatriz, and for our future happiness I will hope you are not self-deceived. But remember, I, at least, have never misled you as to my feelings or character. I have feigned nothing, so far as I am concerned, and if you should decide on committing yourself to my keeping it will be with a perfect knowledge of what you are risking."

Lady Beatriz gave a startled, suspicious look at the grave countenance of the speaker.

"Then you are doubtful as to our future, Gaston. You do not consider that we are pledged to carry out the bond made for us?" she asked, quickly.

"I consider that your happiness, and in consequence mine, ought not to be sacrificed in the slightest degree for the sake of wealth and rank, Beatriz," was his grave reply. "In a few months you will be twenty-one, when your election must be made between this marriage and the loss of part of your fortune that is to revert to other purposes unless you become Countess of Ashworth."

"Do you refuse to perform the contract?" observed Lady Beatriz, significantly. "I am not to be punished for my sins, remember, Gaston."

"Probably I will act on that assurance. It certainly gives me far greater liberty than if I were going to gain anything or injure you in any way. Should we not feel it anguish to our feelings, Beatriz, for that plan to be carried out?"

Lady Beatriz gave a half-accusatory, half-constrained laugh.

"Really, it is too comical to hear your cool dissertations on this subject, Gaston," she said, bitterly. "One really would think it was some royal marriage thus practically considered, or else that we were about double our actual age, quite past all idea of love, and that irritates and chafes me beyond endurance, Gaston," she added, relapsing into her more natural manner.

"There you are wrong, my cousin," he replied, more kindly. "All that I mean is to prevent the unhappiness that might arrive to us both if you were deceived in your own feelings or mine. If we comprehend each other now it will prevent your expecting more than my cooler temperament can give you. I shall study your wishes in every way if you become my wife, and it will then rest with yourself to win anything more that your nature demands. In any case let us be dear relatives and friends, Beatriz," he said, taking her hand rather with the affection of a brother than the tenderness of a lover. "We are both in a measure alone in the world. I shall never fail you in your need if you can trust yourself to confide in me, should any grief or trial befall you in after days."

The girl's hand trembled, though it did not struggle in his grasp.

But there was a strong effort on her part to control the impetuous passion that his calmness only lashed to feverish, boiling heat. Her whole imperious soul was bent on winning him as a lover who would return her love and be captive to her will. And the very difficulty of the latter seemed to increase her resolve—even as the ocean waves gain fury in dashing against a granite wall.

"Yes, yes, I understand and I thank you," she said, sincerely. "But I think it will be time enough to consider that when the other affair is finally arranged. And now that you have explained yourself so entirely it is time for me to put on my habit, the horses will be here before I am ready, if I am not quick in my movements."

And, drawing her hand from his, she passed from the room with the gliding grace that is so hereditary in the Spanish woman, and so rarely to be seen in any other nation.

Gaston followed her with his eyes, and his mobile features changed strangely as she disappeared.

"It would seem as perfect madness on my part," he murmured, "to hesitate in accepting—for it really comes to that and nothing more—so lovely and gifted a creature. Here I am, poor as a mouse, considering my rank, which is a mockery when there is nothing but a shadow of a name without the substance—and yet when a beautiful girl with the wealth I want beyond everything else in the world fairly throws herself at my head I do everything I possibly can to repel her and prevent the fulfilment of the bond she fairly revels in. Gaston, you are foolish," he went on, walking out on the verandah as if to divert his soliloquy from himself, "for I seem to shrink from this lovely maiden as though she were a Gorgon. She does not win on me. She is too vehement, too imperious. She must learn to submit as a woman should ere she can hope to win my heart. Ah, there was something far more sweet

and bewitching in that little recluse, with her picturesque beauty and her courageous devotion that had yet nothing masculine in its bravery. But there is worse idiocy still to think of such an obscure little maiden, whom I have only seen as a mermaid for some five minutes."

And Lord Ashworth left off his murmuring reflection, and, with a light laugh at his own folly, returned into the room he had just quitted, and where Lady Beatriz quickly appeared.

Perhaps it might be the consequence of his self-reproach, or else the attractiveness of Lady Beatriz Clare, as she presented herself in her distracting riding costume, which gave Gaston Ashworth a softer and more devoted manner to his fair companion.

In truth, little deeper cause might have been deemed necessary than the dazzling beauty which now displayed itself to more advantage than on horseback.

Beatriz was a splendid horsewoman, and her whole style was so admirably suited to the costume she wore that Gaston must have been more than man to have resisted the charm.

"What a pity I cannot manage to go in for a little feminine helplessness, Gaston," she said, archly. "If you had to risk your life—or at least your comfort—on my account it would be so extremely interesting, would it not?"

Lord Ashworth laughed sarcastically.

"Better try the effect of saving me first, Beatriz," he replied, lightly. "And that you may perhaps do without risking more than what most women deem quite valueless—happiness and truth; but in our case, dearest," he went on, more softly than he had yet spoken, "we will hope such sacrifice will be needless. I may owe to you more than life and yet find the debt but a sweet and welcome bondage."

Beatriz Clare's beautiful lashes once more veiled the glorious eyes, but there was an exquisite sweetness in the smile that crossed her lips at the tone and words of him she so passionately loved.

CHAPTER VII.

"WILL he live, doctor?" was the stern question put by Eric Desmond to the physician, some twenty-four hours after the accident that had brought so marvellously a guest to the Book Cottage. "I want plain truth, you will understand," he added, as the doctor hesitated to reply.

Now Dr. Hubert Kelly was the very embodiment of an Irish gentleman in his whole appearance and manner. His keen blue eyes could flash the most comic humour or pierce the inner hearts of his companions with a gaze that followed its object like the strange effect that is given us by some portraits which appear to be directed to whatever corner of the apartment the spectator may chance to be, and in the present instance his features were apparently hesitating between the humorous and the grave sides of his questioner's demand.

"Faith, Mr. Desmond, I might quickly answer you in the native style by replying 'Sorra a one o' me knows,'" he returned, in a rich Irish brogue, "but it is far from my custom to tell falsehoods when put upon honour, especially to a 'gentleman,'" he added, with an emphasis on the word.

Mr. Desmond calmly waited the next sentence without vouchsafing more than the slightest possible bow of acknowledgment for the implied compliment, and Dr. Kelly, after a slight pause that might have a deeper object than mere hesitation, went on:

"Truth to tell, then, Mr. Desmond," he continued, "I think the matter rests as much with you as myself. The lad is fairly down with a fit of brain fever that won't do much harm or last long, because it's just from the knock on his head that he's gone wrong, and not any disease."

"Then there is not much damage. I presume he will soon get right again," observed the recluse of the cottage, with a singular mingling of regret and satisfaction in his tone and gesture.

"Not at all, not at all, my good sir!" broke in the doctor, in his broadest accent. "It's just this, Mr. Desmond—the lad risked his life for the pretty creature you are lucky enough to call daughter, and either that or something else is damaging his brain. The raving is all turning on his and her safety, and unless that is quieted—and she is the only one who can do it—why, there will be a wail sung over him before many days or, at the most, weeks are over," he went on, with more sternness than it might have been thought his humorous good-natured features could have been thought to convey.

"Sir, you certainly go beyond my comprehension—I will not say my forbearance," said the recluse, with a sudden flush of angry resentment in his haggard face.

"Oh, I'll soon get over that difficulty, my good

friend," went on the importunate physician. "The meaning can soon be explained, and, as to forbearance, it's very little of that sort of thing that Hubert Kelly cares to excite. It's just this, in plain words, which you just now demanded, Mr. Desmond. Mr. Vesoi is incessantly asking for your daughter's safety, and utterly deaf to every assurance, as well as hopelessly obstinate in refusing all remedies except from her influence. His life hangs on her presence in his chamber and her skilful treatment of his disease. It rests with you, I suppose to sanction the arrangement. She will hardly refuse if you give her permission, and can hardly defy your authority if you refuse it."

"You are at least correct in that," returned Mr. Desmond, laughingly. "Miss Desmond is scarcely a wild Irish girl to run counter to every idea of propriety, Dr. Kelly, and the whole idea is utterly repugnant to both."

"And its reverse is equally so to gratitude, humanity, and honour, Mr. Desmond," sternly returned Dr. Kelly, with a suspicious glitter in his keen eyes. "Sir, you dare not refuse to save the life of one to whom you owe it that your child is here to be subject to your will. I have spoken plainly. It is at your peril you refuse—the peril of blood on your conscience, if not on your hands," he went on, with a commanding dignity he could assume at his pleasure, albeit such power might be a little suspected by those who knew him only in his convivial hours.

Eric Desmond's lips compressed sternly, his brow was contracted in a heavy frown of anger, and perhaps conscience stricken, submitted to a most hated necessity.

"It is a most unusual and most repugnant proceeding, Dr. Kelly," he said, with constrained coldness. "But in the manner you put the case you deprive me of liberty of action where my daughter is concerned. In any case, I insist that you, as a gentleman, will give me your pledge to liberate me from my promise at the first possible hour, and that you will explain to Miss Desmond that such aberrations of mind do not betoken anything but the ordinary wanderings of a diseased brain on the last subject that had chanced to occupy the mind."

"Oh, faith, I'll swear white is black, and love hate, if that's all you want," laughed the physician, with his irresistible twinkle of the eye. "Anything to save my patient's life. You see, Mr. Desmond, he's heir to a baronetcy and fair lands and wealth, so I've an eye to business in the matter. Can't afford to kill him, my good friend, like a bog-trotter, who has been in a row at Donnybrook Fair. Where's the 'Pride of the Lake'? I'll soon put her in training before she begins her new work."

And Mr. Desmond, with a cold bow of assent, left the room in search of his fair, and to his idea, fated child.

There was a remarkable contrast between the expressions of the father and daughter as they stood together in the pretty drawing-room that had till late days been associated with the happiest time that Thyra Desmond had known in her brief career.

The recluse remained somewhat in the background, but still his earnest eyes were bent upon the figures of his daughter and the physician with a keen severity in their gaze that bespoke mingled annoyance and displeasure even though the necessities of the case prevented his giving vent to the vexation that was rankling within.

But Thyra in her sweet innocence and gentle anxiety for the sufferer betrayed neither fear nor embarrassment in her graceful manner.

"Well, Miss Desmond—and it's you that are the very hope and stay on whom I depend in my patient's case," began Dr. Kelly, with the peculiar mixture of comic humour and latent thought of purpose that distinguished him and which made him very inexplicable to superficial observers of his character.

Thyra gave a slight shake of her pretty head.

"And it is you who are mocking me, good doctor," she said, in playful imitation of his phrase and manner. "What am I to do that you cannot accomplish ten times better?"

"Well, it is just from one simple circumstance," replied the doctor, smiling. "I never was a young lady, and never was almost drowned, which drawbacks are inseparable difficulties in the way, so far as I am concerned. But as you combine both these requisites I want you to use your advantages to the very utmost. You must quiet the wild wanderings of this luckless carman by your presence and your influence and induce him to swallow all the detestable drinks I may choose to pour down his throat. Mind you, I don't want to turn you into a sister of mercy. You need only come to the rescue in case of emergencies, and, meanwhile, take what relaxation you please, only I require you to calm this frenzy, of

there will be little hope of his life in some forty-eight hours or so from this time."

The eyes of both the gentlemen were fixed on the young girl as the physician spoke, and if either her father or the doctor had cherished one suspicion as to her unconscientiousness of any ulterior feelings or results from such a duty as was demanded of her it would at once have been set at rest by her simple reply.

"Of course I shall only be too thankful, too proud to be able to repay the boon I owe to Mr. Vesci," she said, quietly, "and I will try my very best, only," she added, with a bowing look of appeal in her eyes, "I am so inexperienced in all the useful arts. Papa himself has never needed me as a nurse, so I shall be a terrible novice in the matter."

Dr. Kelly laughed slightly, though he dared not exactly give expression to the thought that prompted the smile.

"Ah, there is a great deal in mother-wit, Miss Desmond," he said, gravely; "depend on it you will find your sex's instinct guide you. If not I shall soon depose you from your office, which, by the way, you had better commence without delay. So I will take my leave for a few hours. I shall return again at night, and bring the necessary medicines. Time is everything in these cases, which are as rapid in their results as a fit of the cholera. Adieu, ma bella donna. I don't mean homeopathically speaking," he laughed. "Good day, Mr. Desmond."

And in a few minutes the doctor's horse was heard rapidly galloping along the shore of the lake.

The recluse had coldly returned his guest's greeting by a silent bow, and he now for the first time addressed his daughter.

"Thyra," he said, gravely, "I have reluctantly yielded to this doctor's representations, but if he has deceived me, in any respect I shall know how to resent and punish the freedom. But it is right you should understand your true position in the case. Whatever interest you may feel in this unfortunate patient, as having in some measure saved your life, and now suffering from serious illness, you will remember the warning I now give you," he went on, rapidly, but earnestly. "The instant it is safe to remove him from my house I shall insist on his leaving us, and it will be against my wish and without my knowledge if you ever see or hold any intercourse with him again. I have before told you a cloud hangs over your destiny which will prevent your mingling with your equals in age and rank. I never meant such as might appear to suit your tastes and habits," he hastily corrected himself. "So if you permit any foolish wishes or feelings to mingle with simple kindness and sympathy you will both displease me most seriously and necessitate very stringent and perhaps painful measures to be taken on my part."

There was a flash of the proud spirit that so mingled with Eric Desmond's morbid self-deprecation and resolve in the look and tone of his daughter as she replied:

"It is not for me to resent anything you may consider it right—you may consider it necessary to say to me, papa; but it is needless. You will not find me wanting in self-control, whatever I may have to share in the endurance of your misfortunes. But I do ask—I think I may expect that you will trust your daughter's womanly pride not to be so weak and foolish as you seem to believe."

Perhaps Eric Desmond did not understand the real nature of his child. Perhaps he did not do justice to the result of the silent and gradual lessons that she had learnt from books and from the grandeur of the scenes amidst which she had roamed from early childhood.

Or else the sorrow and the trials in which he lived had weakened and perverted his powers of perception and judgment.

He longed perhaps to explain more fully his meaning, he would fain have healed the wound he had inflicted by telling the fair young creature how attractive she might be to the enfeebled senses of the invalid, and how dangerous might be the very inexperience and simplicity which ignored her own powers of captivation and the devotion she might inspire in her patient. Had he done so, had he confided that much in his young and submissive child there would have been true wisdom in his treatment as well as more loving gentleness of tone. But Eric Desmond had lived too long as a lonely recluse without the softening influence of a woman's companionship for such measures.

And his daughter retired from his presence to the assumption of her new duties with a sense rather of injustice and tyranny than the guiding wisdom of a father's hand.

"Thyra, Thyra, is it you? Are you really alive and safe?" murmured Brian Vesci, as his young nurse stood by his bedside offering him a glass of restorative that had been prepared for him on his

awakening from a long and refreshing sleep some three days after the above scene.

The girl's expressive eyes were watching each turn of the patient's wan features with a quick, anxious gaze.

Dr. Kelly had told her the special symptoms that might be looked for on the awaking from the crisis of his fever, and she was eagerly scanning their appearance as an augury of what was to ensue for life or death.

It was perhaps a pardonable error if the young man did somewhat misinterpret the soft, fixed look in that lovely face as tokens of far different and warmer interests than they were intended to convey.

"Yes, we are all safe, thank Heaven," she said, softly. "You have been in the most danger, you have suffered more than the rest, but you are better now and will soon be well if you will be careful and not excite yourself too much."

"Have you been nursing me? Will you stay with me then?" he asked, as eagerly as his feelings would allow.

"I have assisted in nursing you," she replied, evasively. "You seemed to have an impression that some one was drowned, and Dr. Kelly thought it might dispel the illusion if I were with you."

"And where am I?" he asked, suddenly looking around as if it had but just occurred to him that he was in some strange place among those on whom he had no claim.

"In my father's house; you were brought here insensible," she replied. "Of course he was thankful to receive the preserver of his daughter's life."

"Yes, I remember—yes. Mr. O'Byrne told me," murmured the invalid. "It is very singular, is it not? Where is he, sweet Thyra?" he asked, using, as it seemed unconsciously, her Christian name.

"He will see you presently; do not excite yourself. You must be calm and quiet and try to sleep again," she continued, warningly.

"Yes, and for ever if you will stay with me," said the invalid. "Promise not to leave me, Thyra. I will be as submissive as a child to every gesture of yours, but I cannot be left alone yet," he added, pleadingly.

What could the girl do but give a half-expressed, a half-implied promise to watch over his slumber if he would try to rest? And then she placed herself in a shaded corner where she had spent many an hour of anxious watching during the past few days.

"I cannot see you there; please sit where I can see you, it will calm my sick fancies," said Brian, pleadingly. "Do you know while I was so ill I was certain you were in the room, and when I looked up I could see you, and that sent me to sleep once more. I want to close my eyes with your face as a last view on my brain."

What could Thyra do in such a perplexing crisis but comply?

It was doubtful whether the very dependence of her charge did not in a measure draw her more closely towards him, and yet whether in pity or in dearer and more spontaneous love was a problem hidden as yet from her own heart.

She drew her chair a little nearer to the foot of the bed, where the patient could see her with perfect ease, and, taking up a book, prepared to read in the absolute silence that was favourable to the patient's repose.

But ere she had travelled down one of the closely printed pages, the invalid's voice sounded once more on the quiet atmosphere.

"Thyra, will you promise me one thing?" asked Brian, raising his head feebly from the pillow.

Thyra smiled archly at the almost childlike pleading.

"You are terribly exacting," she said, playfully. "Sick people are always spoiled, I suppose. I have just granted one petition most graciously, what is the next?"

"Will you promise not to forget me, not to be surprised or indignant if I do not seem to be mindful of all I have seen and done and heard at Lough Corrib?" he said, "if I am long in returning or asking more plainly than I dare to do now for what is the dearest boon of all?"

If Thyra did in the least comprehend what might be the hidden meaning of these words she certainly concealed with rare self-control her impressions.

"I certainly am not likely to forget such strange adventures as we have known together, Mr. Vesci," she replied, with real or affected playfulness. "In our quiet regions it is enough to see a stranger for his advent to be long remembered without the adjuncts of a shipwreck and an illness into the category."

Brian looked reproachfully at her.

"Is that all then?" he said, sadly; "will there only be such memory as you might cherish of a travelling

packman or a Newfoundland dog? That is scarcely flattering to my heart, Thyra," he added, mournfully.

The girl flushed involuntarily. She could scarcely ignore such words as those.

"You are ill and weak, you do not know what you are saying, Mr. Vesci. If you are not more calm and still I must leave you in spite of my promise," she returned, hurriedly.

"I cannot be quiet till I have said all that as yet I may dare to speak," he returned. "Thyra, your image has filled my heart since the first time I saw you with the bright flowers in your friend's room. I shall not forget. I shall return to attempt to win you, if you will but give me one word or look of encouragement. I hope—I ask no more. I do not expect any promise from you after such brief space, but I cannot rest until you have told me if I may dare to hope."

Thyra had half risen from her chair. She had remembered but too painfully the warnings and the threats of her stern father when the young man first began to speak.

Yet, as his faltering, touching tones came on her ear, with all the softness that his feeble, suffering state could add to their tenderness, she still lingered as under a spell.

She could scarcely feel certain that he was even now not labouring under some dreaming delusion, and could not bring her lips to frame an answer to the pleading, respectful words, save one of soft and kindly gratitude and regard.

But ere she had time to feel the actual embarrassment of her position the door was cautiously pushed open and her father entered.

"I heard voices, so I supposed I should not injure the invalid by coming in," he said, in his cold, measured tone. "Mr. Vesci, I am rejoiced to see that you are better. Your recovery will no doubt be a rapid one, considering your youth and strength, and a great relief, I daresay, to be freed from our dull seclusion."

Thyra was half shrinking behind the curtains. She could not tell how much her father had heard of the previous conversation, and, besides, her agitation was too plain and too recent to be at once subdued.

Mr. Desmond's keen eyes detected the movement.

"Ah! you are right, my child. No doubt you are weary. Leave the room now; I will watch by Mr. Vesci till Dr. Kelly comes. I hope he will put up with me for a nurse now," he went on, gravely.

Thyra dared not reply, though she caught an appealing look from the invalid, and she quickly glided from the room and descended the stairs to the drawing-room, perhaps in the idea that Dr. Kelly might soon arrive and demand news of the patient from her lips.

In truth she was not disposed to rest. She preferred the soft, fresh air that blew through the open French windows to the imprisonment of her own chamber, and ere many minutes had gone by she found herself almost insensibly passing to the terrace and drinking in its soft, fragrant air and the fair prospect that was stretching out before her view with as much delight as if unfamiliar to her senses.

Her eyes were turned in the direction of the personage, on the other side of the lake, and so intently was she striving to discern some trace of the presence of her friends in the well-known spot that she did not perceive the approach of a stranger guest near the spot where she was standing; albeit he certainly did not make any special effort to approach unnoticed by the young hostess.

"Miss Desmond will pardon my intrusion, I hope," came with startling abruptness on the girl's ears, and, turning suddenly, she perceived the well-remembered figure of the stranger who had so powerfully aided in saving her own and Brian Vesci's lives, albeit she had not seen him since the memorable day of the catastrophe. "I am here to ask tidings of the patient," he added, as Thyra hurriedly uttered some words of greeting. "It is by no means the first time I have visited the cottage for that purpose, but till to-day I have never been fortunate enough to see you, who are so associated with the adventure which that lake shall occasion."

"No, I did not even know you had called on my father," replied the girl, with more confusion than she had even experienced in her far more agitating scene with Brian Vesci.

"Indeed, how is that?" said the visitor, with a keen, annoyed look that Thyra could not quite comprehend. "Have you really been so much employed, Miss Desmond, that you had no leisure to waste on such insignificant matters as a poor, wayfarer's tourist's anxiety for your own and your patient's welfare?"

Thyra laughed gaily now.
 "I really did not imagine your peace could be injured by the accident" to such perfect strangers," she said, playfully, "or I would have been more guarded in my confession. However, I have the pleasure of assuring you that Mr. Vesci is decidedly better, I believe he may now almost be pronounced out of danger, but I scarcely dare give such a report till Dr. Kelly comes."

"And have you not suffered, Miss Desmond, from the accident?" asked Gaston, quickly.

"I—oh, no," she replied, with an amused smile. "We Irish maidens are not so easily laid aside by a cold bath, only I was greatly annoyed to give so much trouble and anxiety to Mr. Vesci—and you," she added, with a most unconscious emphasis in her tone.

"And have you been nursing Mr. Vesci as a compensation?" asked Gaston again.

Thyra scarcely knew why she was annoyed at her own inability to reply in the negative, and why a blush rose to her cheek at the quick though passing glance that the stranger gave to her glowing face.

"I have assisted in attending on Mr. Vesci. It has been a severe attack," she said, "and he needed constant nursing; now, of course, it will be unnecessary, and I am very unversed in such matters," she added, with a pretty shrug of her shoulders that gave a naïve, almost foreign archness to the movement.

Gaston could not take his eyes from that lovely sunny face, with its sweet and thoughtful yet bright expression, its exquisite colouring, and its speaking eyes.

Beatrice Clare was perhaps far handsomer in a strict critical point of view; there was a dignity in her mien, a rich oriental gorgeousness in her whole style of beauty, and her mien and air had more distinguished and trained polish. But this Irish maiden of the lake possessed a fascination in her every tone and look, a feminine softness and yet a brave, high courage, that was inexpressibly winning to the young yet somewhat blasé earl.

Besides the romantic circumstances that surrounded her, the mystery of her birth and position, and the slight unconfessed jealousy that her enforced attendance on Brian Vesci occasioned, gave an additional stimulus to the interest which he involuntarily cherished for the young recluse.

"I am staying in the neighbourhood only for a short time," he resumed. "I hope to return after a necessary absence to take a still closer view of its attractions," and he laid an unusual stress on the last word that Thyra's unsophisticated innocence did not in the slightest degree comprehend.

"Yes, it well deserves it, it is so beautiful; no one who has not lived here can believe all its charms," she replied, eagerly. "And every season, every hour of the day has such variety, and all so lovely."

Lord Ashworth looked at her brilliant eyes and animated expression, and recalled with involuntary and perhaps unwelcome vividness the languishing yet vehement temperament of his destined bride.

"Do you never weary of the solitude?" he asked, in a voice of excitement, almost pathos indeed.

"Never of the solitude," she replied, in a low, earnest tone. "If all was bright and happy with those I love best I can always find amusement, the day is too short for me," she continued. "But there is Dr. Kelly coming, he will give you a more correct report of his patient than I can," she said, quietly, as her eyes discerned the physician's well-known steed in the distance, and Lord Ashworth quickly obeyed the hint and took a reluctant leave of the fascinating lake maiden.

(To be continued.)

CONDUCT OF LIFE.—A young man can do great things, in any direction, if he will but set about it with determination, and industry, and patience. No young man with any sort of character will feel willing to be for ever behind in the race for position, and honour, and knowledge. He would prefer to lead and not to be led. If he desires to lead he can do so. It rests absolutely with him to determine the position which he is to occupy. Earnest endeavour and a right purpose, good habits, good morals, and good health, clean hands and a pure heart—these are the essentials; with these all things are possible.

A NUMBER of ancient and interesting documents relating to the monastery of Worcester have been lately restored to the custody of the Dean and Chapter. Among them is a charter of Wolstan, Bishop of Worcester, dated A.D. 1809; the will of King John, and a deed relating to a dispute between Godfrey Giffard, Bishop of Worcester, A.D. 1268, and Gilbert Earl of Clare and Johanna his wife, the daughter of Edward I., as to a trench dug by the earl on the summit of Malvern Hill. These documents

are at present in the hands of the chapter clerk, Mr. A. C. Hooper.

THE CAPTIVE COUNT; OR THE BEAUTIFUL FLOWER.

COUNT.

I know a flower—a beautiful flower—
 For which as here I lie
 Within these hated prison walls
 I breathe full many a sigh:
 For in my freedom's happy days
 That flower was ever near me;
 Would I might see it once again;
 Ah! how the sight would cheer me!

ROSE.

Who can it be, Oh, gallant count!
 But I, the royal rose?
 For am I not, beyond compare,
 The noblest flower that grows
 In field or garden?—and since thou
 Art graced with knightly armour,
 The royal rose, the queen of flowers,
 Must surely be thy charmer!

COUNT.

I own the sweetness of the rose,
 Her dainty sense invites;
 And well I know her crimson robes
 The maiden's eyes delights;
 But she is not, for all her charms,
 The flower that most I honour;
 I love another—would that I
 Again might gaze upon her!

LILY.

Yon rose is over proud, I ween,
 To hold her head so high;
 Knowest thou a flower, in field or bower,
 One half so fair as I?
 The pure in heart esteem me most,
 And if thou livest purely,
 Thou, for her maiden purity,
 Must love the lily, surely!

COUNT.

My knightly honour, lily fair,
 Is clear of any stain;
 Yet none the less I here endure
 A dungeon's weary pain;
 Than thine, I know, no saintly heart
 From earthly fault is clearer;
 And yet the one I'm thinking of
 To me is vastly dearer!

PINK.

The pink must be the lovely one
 That casts the witching spell;
 There's not a flower of all he tends,
 The gardener loves so well:
 In colours bright to please the sight
 I surely am complete;
 And then, of all the flowery tribe,
 My odour is the sweetest!

COUNT.

The pink I own a brilliant flower
 The gardener ill could spare;
 Its gorgeous colours charm the eye;
 Its odour fills the air;
 But though the flower that I desire
 Is not one half so splendid,
 To me no pink was e'er so sweet,
 That ever gardener tended!

VIOLET.

If modest beauty, noble count,
 For once were bold to speak,
 Perhaps it is the violet
 Which thou dost fondly seek?
 If I am she thou pinest for,
 I would that I were near thee,
 Companion of thy prison life,
 That haply I might cheer thee!

COUNT.

The gentle violet I prize;
 For who but loves to praise
 The maid whose pure and dainty charms
 Are graced by modest ways?
 But not upon the mountain's side
 Is found the humble blossom
 Whose beauty fills with tender love
 The captive's yearning bosom.
 It lives beside yon winding stream,
 A flower of azure hue,
 That seems to say, "Forget me not;
 For I am ever true!"
 And though a captive here I lie,
 That gentle voice can waken
 Hope, love and joy; for thus I know
 I am not all-forsaken!

E. G. S.

A COURAGEOUS LADY.—At Piche, not long ago

a party of ladies expressed a desire to inspect the workings of the Raymond Mine, and were accordingly escorted into the lower depths by the foreman. After satisfying their curiosity, the conversation turned upon the means of egress, and the fatigue and danger of climbing the ladders with which the shaft is furnished, whereupon one of the fair visitors said that she believed that she could climb the ladder herself. After some badinage the foreman promised the lady a new silk dress if she climbed from one of these levels to another alone, a perpendicular height of 200 feet. The challenge was no sooner made than accepted, and the dauntless lady climbed the ladder for the specified 200 feet, a task that few men, except miners, would care to undertake. The foreman is now of the opinion that if instead of 200 the ladder had been 1,000 feet in length the lady would have climbed it if there was to be found a new silk dress on reaching the top.

WORDS TO THE YOUNG.

We try to speak often and wisely to the young of both sexes, and we are often overjoyed to learn that they appreciate our efforts to interest them. We know that whatever our nation is to become rests with the young; that the future of the country is in their hands. So we seek to make the boys and girls sweet and pure and moral and thoughtful and intelligent, and find our reward in the fact that the work which we do in this direction will live long after we are gone.

There is not a man alive to-day who, if he tell the truth, will not say that he fairly wasted a good deal of time which he might have usefully employed. Young men and young women never or rarely reflect upon these things; but the reflection deepens as years advance. We wish then that we could live life over once more. If this were allowed us, how many errors should we avoid; how many follies would we surely escape; how many noble deeds would we do.

At middle age we are just about ready to begin life in earnest. As we stand midway between the cradle and the grave, we begin to wonder and regret that we permitted the days of youth to go by only half enjoyed. For the truth is, we do not really enjoy time which is mispent. We cannot really say that hours passed in idleness or dissipation are enjoyed. We are never really happy when we are not gaining something. There is absolutely no genuine comfort except in acquisition, and the supremest joy of all is found in the acquisition of useful knowledge.

ANECDOTES, ABOUT DOCTORS.

A GENTLEMAN visiting the celebrated Doctor Abernethy being roughly interrupted, suddenly locked the door, put the key in his pocket, and insisted on being heard. Abernethy smiled, and complimented the patient on his resolution.

To a gentleman, who gave him twenty pounds to re-attend his wife, he said:

"Are you the idiot who gave me twenty pounds the other day? Go home and tell your wife to dine earlier, and eat less; and do you keep your money in your pocket, for no doctor's advice is worth twenty pounds."

To a lady he said, severely:

"Go home and tell your husband he will not have a wife this day six months."

Abernethy was no respecter of persons. The Duke of Wellington, angry at having to wait his turn, abruptly entered his room. Abernethy asked him how he had entered.

"By the door, sir."

"Then," said the irascible doctor, "I recommend you to make your exit the same way."

He is also said to have refused to attend George IV. till his lecture at the hospital was over.

That this great surgeon was truly charitable no one can deny. Every one remembers the story of how he returned all his fees to a poor widow who had consulted him, and added fifty pounds to enable her to give her sick child a daily ride.

He had a horror of surgical operations, and rejoiced when the evil could be averted without such rough and terrible remedies.

A good joke is attributed to the Earl of Dudley. His lordship says that he wishes people would not talk about his winnings on the turf, as every success which he makes invariably leads to an application to build a church.

THE bust of the Republic, in the shape of a Greek head, has been voted for the municipal offices in Paris, and the principal city halls in the provinces are to be decorated, by order of the Minister of the Interior, with engraved portraits of MacMahon. Some of the severer critics maintain that as a republic represents the faces of all citizens it needs no bust.



[A LINK IN THE CHAIN.]

THE SPIDER AND THE FLY.

BY
CHARLES GARVICE,

AUTHOR OF

"Only Country Love," "The Gipsy Peer," "Fickle Fortune," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Oh, fear not in a world like this,
And thou shalt know ere long—
Know how sublime a thing it is
To suffer and be strong.

VIOLET was carried home, still in the death-like swoon which had followed close upon the awful shriek of horror which had electrified the room and gone far to convince the jury of Leicester's guilt.

With tenderest care they laid her upon the couch in the drawing-room, and there the gentle and miserable women employed all their efforts to awaken her to the bitter consciousness of her unhappiness.

At last a shudder ran through her frame, and the dark, mournful eyes opened.

The doctor, who had accompanied them from the inquest, held up his hand to command silence.

"Let no one speak!" he said.

Violet raised her eyes and looked round.

Her gaze rested upon Mrs. Dodson, and then, with a half-suppressed cry of anguish, she covered her eyes with her hands.

Mrs. Dodson knelt beside her.

Violet rose and drew her to her bosom.

"You would comfort me," she said. "It is I who should comfort you."

Then these two women, looked in that mournful embrace, wept together.

At last Violet, by a mighty effort, controlled herself, and drawing the afflicted mother to a seat beside her, murmured:

"Will you leave us alone?"

Mrs. Mildmay and the rest softly left the room.

Then Violet took Mrs. Dodson's hands, and, with the gentleness of a child, kissed her.

"You do not believe him guilty?" sobbed the poor woman.

"No," said Violet, in a low, earnest voice. "No."

Something in the "no" was so truly despairful that the affrighted mother gazed up into the white face of the girl with a terrible gesture.

"Hush! Be brave!" murmured Violet. "Be brave. We do not know all. We are in the hands of Heaven, both of us, you and I who loved him; ay, I am not ashamed to own it now. He can never hear me."

"Never?" faltered Mrs. Dodson.

"Never!" repeated Violet. "It were cruel kind-

ness to deceive you. Who could break it to you better or more gently than I?"

"Oh, kill me!" moaned the mother. "What is it? Is he dead?"

Violet kissed her tenderly.

"He is where no trouble may reach him! Hush!" she whispered, as Mrs. Dodson burst into a paroxysm of tears. "It is not for long—we shall not be parted from him long! It is only for a little while. Till the day of meeting comes let us strengthen each other. You shall be my mother and I your daughter. I do love you. Take me to your heart, mother!"

Truly love teaches us a wondrous wisdom.

In those words the bereaved mother found a consolation deep and strange.

In the torture of the moment gleamed a shadow of consolation.

She had lost a son; but it was not for long: she would join him presently in a world where there was no sorrow or parting. Meanwhile here was a loving soul to teach her patience and help her on the road.

Half an hour afterwards Violet entered the small drawing-room, white and haggard, but calm.

She went up to her aunt and kissed her.

"She is upstairs," she said, "quiet in my room."

Will you go to her?"

Mrs. Mildmay silently left the room.

Then Violet turned to the others, who were surprised at her calm composure and wondering what might happen next, and said:

"Where is Mr. Dodson?"

"At home," said Mr. Thaxton. "Mr. Fairfax took him home after the inquest."

Violet shuddered slightly.

"Will some one tell him that I want to see him?"

The captain, who had been watching the proceedings with lynx eyes, rose, with a sorrowful face.

"I will go," he said.

But at that moment Bertie Fairfax was seen hurrying down the path.

"No," said Violet, and she opened the casement and beckoned Bertie.

He entered.

His face was as white as hers, but there was a passionate indignation in his look that strongly contrasted with the deep, sorrowful despair in her eyes.

"Thank Heaven!" he exclaimed, taking her hand, "you have recovered? I feared this terrible mockery of justice had overcome you! Where is Mrs. Dodson? She must go to her husband at once; it is terrible to see him. Leicester is her only child, and—and—why are you all so quiet? Miss Mildmay, you do not believe that this verdict was a true one, you cannot?" And his voice rose passionately.

Violet held up her hand.

"Hush!" she said, with a tone of mingled pity and anguish.

Then with a sudden tragic agony she turned upon them.

"Are you all blind?" she exclaimed. "Do you not see what has happened? Is there not one of you who can read the truth in this terrible confusion? Do you not see that for us there is no hope—no hope?"

"What do you mean?" breathed Bertie. "Do you know anything? Is Leicester found?"

"Found? No!" said Violet, forcing back her tears. "He will never be found in this world. Leicester Dodson is dead!"

"Dead!" said Bertie, dropping into a chair and staring at her. "Dead!"

"Ay, dead!" she repeated. "Can you not see what has happened. The man followed him to murder him. The victim struggled and, in self-defence, slew his would-be assassin. In the death-struggle they both rolled over the cliff and Leicester Dodson lies at the bottom of the sea!"

"By Heaven she is right!" breathed Mr. Thaxton.

The doctor hurried over to the side where she sat with bent head and clasped hands.

"My dear young lady," he said, "that is a conclusion your excitement—ahem!—has betrayed you into. There is no evidence—"

She interrupted him, with a sorrowful glance.

"No evidence?" she said. "How came his hat, how came that flower there? Where is he? Do you think that if Leicester Dodson were alive he would not be here to prove his innocence? You do not know him—I do."

Bertie rose, trembling like a leaf.

"And I," he said. "Miss Mildmay, you are right. Heaven help us! what is to be done?" and he, strong man turned to child, burst into tears.

"You have a task before you," said Violet, placing her hand upon his arm. "Nerve yourself for that. Yours is the duty to break it to the father. Leave his mother—my mother—to me."

Then she left them, as calm and composed as before.

"This is terrible, gentlemen," said the doctor, wiping the perspiration from his brow, "terrible. That young creature is a heroine! Heaven grant her strength to play her noble part!"

"Amen!" breathed the captain, in a voice choked with emotion.

After a spasm of extreme excitement, whether it

be of joy or misery, there follows a period of numbness or calm.

The days rolled on in the little fishing village, and the terrible drama which had convulsed it was still talked of and remembered, but with less vividness every day.

Up at the Cedars two sorrowful human beings, clad in black, were learning that bitter lesson which all must learn, to suffer and to bear.

There was one to comfort them and to share in their misery; she was never long from their side, and had grown deep into their hearts.

A great change had come over Violet.

More beautiful than ever in the delicate calm of her face, with its wistful sadness of resignation, she bore her burden meekly and uncomplainingly.

The poor loved her better than ever, and found her peculiar charm strengthened, but the artless laugh and the happy ring in the clear, pure voice had gone.

In their place had come an ineffable softness and infinite patience.

When the mind is ill at ease the body, always sympathetic, grows thin and ailing.

Violet's plump roundness gradually toned down to a spareness which was grace itself, but, alas! strangely different to her old healthful vigour.

One other person beside the relations of Leicester mourned for him, and that was little lame Jemie, Willie Sanderson's brother.

To the poor, afflicted lad Leicester had seemed to be a beneficent god. The child adored the man who had in so kindly and true a fashion ministered to his wants, and no one shed more tears than little Jemie.

In his little chair, which he could propel himself, he would haunt the Cedars, and the walks which had been favorite resorts of Leicester, and there weep over the memory of his great friend and hero.

One evening the lad set off in his quiet, sad way for a walk, or rather ride on the cliff.

He had a morbid longing to see the spot where his hero met with his death.

It was an arduous task to drive the little chaise up the steep, but by dint of hard struggle the little cripple accomplished it and rested on the spot which the feet of the curious had almost worn bare.

Impelled by an awful curiosity, the boy drove close to the edge of the cliff and looked down.

With a shudder, he burst into tears.

Below him he fancied he could see the dead body of his friend lying a prey to the sea-gulls and the crows.

He drew back, with a sob of grief, and was about to return, but as he made the movement, his tear-dimmed eyes caught the glimmer of some bright object lying under the edge of the cliff, half-hidden by the overhanging tufts of grass.

With a mechanical curiosity, he drew near to it, and saw, with a beating heart, that it was a knife.

Instantly it flashed upon him that it was the very knife with which Leicester had, in self-defence, slain Jem Starling.

The lad's heart beat fast.

Thank Heaven, he had found it! Had it fallen into other hands it would have been used, perhaps, as another piece of evidence against the memory of his hero.

Dangerous and painful as the task might be he determined to crawl out of his chaise and gain the knife, and with great difficulty he succeeded.

With the knife hidden in his bosom, he returned home, determined to destroy the weapon, with its tell-tale rust of blood, on the first opportunity.

Of course the doctor was not at all satisfied with the outward calm and serenity with which Violet bore her grief.

"It is all very well," he said to Mr. Thaxton, as he and that gentleman were smoking a cigar on the lawn and conferring together as to the state of Violet's health, "it is all very well to say that she is resigned, but I must confess that I do not like the word when it is applied to the numbed stillness of a young girl. She gets thinner every day and yet smiles on always the same. I'll wager that not even the father or mother suffers so much as she does."

Mr. Thaxton shook his head.

"What do you advise?" he asked.

"Some diversion—change of scene," said the doctor. "This place is all very well, pretty and charming and healthy, but we must not forget that she cannot look from her room window or take a walk without being reminded of the events of the last month. I say, take her to town, but before she goes try and rouse her."

"Ah," said Mr. Thaxton, "but how is that to be managed?"

"Has she no business matters?" asked the doctor. "Could you not get up a little difficulty of some sort? anything would answer the purpose to divert her mind from this terrible subject."

"Hem!" said Mr. Thaxton. "I have always avoided business, though, as you are aware, I was summoned to go into some matter. Every day I offer to touch upon the subject with Mrs. Mildmay she entreats me to wait a little and to remain."

"Yes," said the doctor, "and I am very glad you are here, but still I think I would attempt to interest her. Cannot Captain Murpoint assist us? He seems to have taken the management of affairs."

"Yes," said Mr. Thaxton, and his brow clouded slightly. "Captain Murpoint is invaluable; he is extremely clever, and seems to obtain implicit obedience here."

"He was an old friend of Miss Mildmay's father?" said the doctor.

"Yes," said Mr. Thaxton, slowly, "a very old friend. May I ask if you knew him before he arrived here?"

"No," said the medical man, "I did not. He was an officer in an Indian regiment, I believe." At that moment Captain Murpoint came on to the lawn.

He had been giving some orders to the gardeners, and was smoking, as usual.

"Good morning," said Mr. Thaxton. "We were talking of you, captain. Mr. Boner was suggesting that it would be as well to attempt a little diversion for Miss Mildmay."

"With all my heart," said the captain, gravely.

"In the shape of business," continued Mr. Thaxton. "You have never informed me yet why my presence was wanted at the Park."

The captain's face flushed slightly. He had been waiting for this moment, and now it had come he braved it boldly.

"I wrote to you at the request of Miss Mildmay," he said. "It was a matter connected with a locket of her father's—mine it would have been had he lived longer. But let us come in; we will find the ladies and go into it—that is if Violet is well enough. You, Mr. Boner, must come and ascertain that for us."

So, with his usual artfulness, he secured another witness for the business which he had on hand.

The three gentlemen went into the drawing-room, where Mrs. Mildmay and Violet were seated, the elder lady knitting, the younger, not reading, with a book open before her.

Mr. Thaxton crossed over to her, and, seating himself by her side, said, in the gentle voice with which he always addressed her:

"My dear young lady, do you feel well enough to go into business this morning?"

Violet smiled faintly.

"I am quite well," she said. "I always am. It is only your kind heart which fears otherwise. What business is it?"

"The business upon which you sent for me," said Mr. Thaxton.

Violet started slightly, and a dim look of pain shadowed her eyes.

"I forgot," she said. "I forgot so many things. Then she looked over at the captain. "Captain Murpoint sent for you; he will tell you."

The captain, thus adjured, crossed over to them and explained.

Mr. Thaxton listened.

"And this locket," he said; "you are anxious to get my dear?"

"Yes," said Violet, sadly. "I would like to have it. I had forgotten it: Yes, I would like to have it; I must have it."

"Then," said Mr. Thaxton, cheerily, hoping to rouse her to something like interest, "suppose we venture boldly into the ghost's quarters and find it? What do you say, Mr. Boner? are you courageous enough to accompany us?"

The doctor smiled an assent.

"Miss Mildmay must come too," he said, hoping to rouse her or to awaken some feeling in place of the dull lethargy which had taken hold of her.

"Yes, I will come. Auntie!" and she called to Mrs. Mildmay, "we will go together."

The whole plan as far as this had worked admirably, and the captain, offering his arm to Violet, led the way to the closed chamber.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Now do my projects gather to a head.

Shakespeare.

ARRIVED at the door Mr. Thaxton tried the handle.

"Have you the key?" he asked.

"Yes," said Violet, and she went to fetch it.

While she was gone Mr. Boner examined the door.

"We shall want a screwdriver," he said; "the door is screwed up."

A servant was despatched for the tool, and Mr. Thaxton himself unscrewed the door.

"The screws are quite rusty," he said, "the door has not been opened since the day on which it was first closed thus."

"No," said Violet, "it has never been opened," and as she spoke she unlocked it.

The party paused on the threshold, struck by the stillness and solemnity of the long-disused chamber.

Violet's face grew paler and her eyes filled with tears.

In her fancy she could still see the beloved form seated as she knew, and his handsome, kindly face turned to greet her as she entered.

"Nothing seems to have been disturbed," said Mr. Thaxton, in his low-pitched voice.

"The dust is thick everywhere," murmured the captain, "and," he added, passing his hand across his eyes, "the chair in which my poor John used to sit still seems waiting for him."

Mr. Thaxton glanced at him under his eyebrows.

"Did you know this room?" he asked.

"N-o," said the captain, with a sigh; "only by his description of it. He was fond of telling us what his house in England was like: over and over he described every inch of his place, and this room in particular."

There were a few moments of silence, during which the lawyer's acute eyes had taken an inventory of the room and its contents.

"Yes," he said. "The room has evidently not been entered for years. Have you the keys, Miss Mildmay?"

Violet handed him a bunch of keys.

The doctor followed the lawyer into the room, and drawing forward chairs, dusted them and requested Violet and Mrs. Mildmay to be seated.

"I suppose," said Mr. Thaxton, "that we had better try this old bureau first. You say," he added, turning to Captain Murpoint, "that the locket is here."

"So my poor friend told me," said the captain. "I give you his words: 'I left it in a drawer of my bureau in my room.' I think he said secret drawer, but I will not be certain. The locket ought to have been mine, but I would gladly resign it to her to whom it should more properly belong."

The lawyer inclined his head.

"Do you know of any secret drawer?" he asked Violet.

She shook her head.

"No," she said. "I never entered the room alone. My father would allow no one to disturb his papers or to arrange his books. There may be a secret drawer, but I do not know of it."

Mr. Thaxton slowly tried a key and opened a drawer.

It was full of papers, which he merely glanced at and laid aside.

Then he opened the writing-desk portion of the bureau and found a drawer full of trinkets.

"Here it must be," he said, pointing to the drawer. "Will you look?"

Violet rose and, with trembling fingers, turned over the jewellery.

"These were my mother's jewels," she said. "I remember that they were hers. My father once asked me to wear them, but he could not bear to see them and took them away again. Yes, I remember them."

"Is the locket there?" asked Mrs. Mildmay.

"No," said Violet, after a pause, and with evident disappointment. "No, there is no locket here."

"Let us search another drawer," said the lawyer, and he unlocked the next in succession.

This also was full of papers, but nothing in the shape of a locket could be found there.

Another and another drawer was searched, but although a quantity of trinkets, mementoes of worth and relics of friendship, were discovered, the anxiously expected locket could not be discovered.

Mr. Thaxton rose from his knees and shook his head.

"There is no locket here," he said. "I am afraid we shall not find it."

Mr. Boner came forward.

"I am rather familiar with the oddities of this sort of furniture," he said. "Indeed, I have a taste for old bookcases and secretaries. May I see if I can find a secret drawer?"

Violet bowed, and Mr. Boner took the place which the lawyer had vacated.

"Generally," he said, "the drawer is at the side, and is opened by a spring which either forms a part of the beading or ornament of the furniture. Now here," he added, "should be the spring."

And he passed his hand upon the beading running round the writing-desk.

The captain stood beside Violet's chair, his face solemnly grave and attentive.

But how his heart beat!

He could have found the spring in a moment, but an offer to assist in the search might jeopardise his whole plot, and he remained inactive though his fingers itched to be at it.

"No," said the doctor, "I am disappointed."

Violet rose.

"I will try," she said, and she passed her white, slender fingers over the ornamented part of the bureau.

As she did so there was a sudden click and before them all the secret drawer glided out.

Violet started, then bent down and examined it.

There was only an old, faded piece of parchment.

"There is no locket here," she said. "Only this," and she laid the paper on the table. "Where else can we look?"

"I do not know," said the lawyer, glancing thoughtfully at the faded parchment.

"It is strange," said the captain. "Very strange. My friend certainly told me that he placed the locket here for safety, and I cannot help thinking that it is here still."

"We will not look for it any longer to-day," said Violet, faintly. "Will you please put the papers where they were—and—close the room again."

And she shuddered.

"You are chilled," said the doctor. "There is a draught here from that broken window," and he pointed to the window, in which a pane was broken.

The captain started.

He had quite forgotten that slight evidence of his dark deed.

"A bat or an owl has flown against it," he said. "Let me take you down stairs, Miss Mildmay."

Violet placed her hand upon his arm.

"One moment," said Mr. Thaxton. "With your permission I will glance at this document: it should be of some importance, so carefully preserved."

Violet made a gesture of assent.

"A lease or something of the sort," muttered the lawyer, putting on his spectacles and taking up the parchment. "Ah!" he exclaimed suddenly, looking up and scanning the faces all round with a look of surprise.

"What is the matter?" said Mrs. Mildmay, nervously.

"Have you any idea as to what this paper may be?" he asked Violet.

She shook her head wearily.

"No," she said. "What is it?"

"This," said the lawyer, tapping the document, "is a codicil to your father's will, signed"—here he glanced at the last page—"by him, legally and in due form."

Violet remained silent.

There was a general expression of surprise.

Mr. Thaxton thought for a moment, with the document in his hand.

Then he said:

"I am glad there were so many present at the finding of the deed, and I think I will take the precaution of sealing it in your presence. May I ring for sealing-wax and paper?"

He rang the long-silenced bell and a servant at his request brought the required articles.

Then with due formality the man of law folded the document and sealed it, using a seal of Violet's for the purpose.

"Now," he said, looking at his watch, "as it is important and only reasonable that we should learn the contents I should recommend that Mr. Beal, the solicitor at Tenby, be telegraphed for. I would rather that another legal adviser as well as myself were present at the reading."

"I will telegraph at once," said the captain, gravely, as the party passed out of the room, which was locked and screwed up as it had been before.

In a very short time Mr. Beal, the Tenby solicitor, arrived.

During the interval the gentlemen had got together and were busy over supposition and conjecture. The captain in his well-bred way declared that whatever the codicil might turn out to be it would be nothing to Violet's disadvantage.

"My old friend," he said, with suppressed emotion, "loved his child better than life itself, and would no more think of wronging her to the extent of a half-penny than he would of doing any other dishonourable action."

The doctor applauded the sentiment immensely, but Mr. Thaxton, who knew more about wills and codicils and the romance clinging to them than the captain could be expected to do, said nothing, but paced up and down outside the library windows thoughtful and stern.

Mr. Beal was the exact opposite to Mr. Thaxton in appearance and demeanour. He was astute, but a gentleman of the old legal school, and he had risen from a heavy dinner at the special summons with not a little of ill-humour.

He shook hands with Mr. Thaxton and expressed a hearty surprise at the news.

"Codicil, eh?" he said. "Hope our respected client hasn't done anything foolish. Singular thing

you should all be present when it was found. It removes all the difficulties in the way of proving it. Sometimes these codicils and unexpected wills are found on the quiet by people who are most interested in finding 'em."

The captain nodded gravely.

"We had better get it read, I suppose," said Mr. Beal, cheerfully. "Is Miss Mildmay well enough to undergo the excitement?"

Miss Mildmay answered for herself by sending a message that if Mr. Beal had arrived she would like the business upon which he had come gone on with at once.

"Come, then," said Mr. Thaxton, and the gentlemen made their way to the library.

Violet was seated near the window, with her hand in Mrs. Mildmay's.

She withdrew it to shake hands with Mr. Beal, but only for that moment.

"This is a singular discovery," said Mr. Beal. "Of course it has considerably surprised you, madam."

Mrs. Mildmay murmured "Yes," and the lawyers, after conferring for a moment, broke the seal.

"It is very short," said Mr. Beal. "Will you read it or shall I?"

"You," said Mr. Thaxton.

Mr. Beal put on his spectacles and cracked the parchment.

There was intense silence.

"The outside of the document," he commenced, clearing his throat, "has these words written on it: 'A codicil to my last will and testament, dated this — day of —, 18—, JOHN MILDMAI.'"

Mr. Thaxton made a note of the date.

Mr. Beal opened the parchment and continued:

"I, John Mildmay, being in sound bodily and mental health, do declare this to be my true codicil to my last will and testament. I do hereby bequeath to my dear and beloved daughter, Violet Mildmay, the whole of my real and personal estates, with the exception of the legacies mentioned in my will, to hold and to have on these terms; that is to say: that I hereby appoint Howard Murpoint, captain in Her Majesty's army, sole guardian and trustee of my moneys and estates, in trust for Violet Mildmay, who shall have and hold them so long as she remains unmarried or marries with the consent of the said Howard Murpoint; and I hereby will that in case of Violet Mildmay's death unwedded or her marriage without the consent of the said Howard Murpoint, that all moneys and properties held under my will shall revert to the said Howard Murpoint, with the exception of the bequests and legacies contained in my will; and I bequeath the sum of five thousand pounds, to be raised from the estate or from my personal assets, to the said Howard Murpoint to have and to hold for his own use. And I do assign to him the sole charge and care of my beloved daughter, Violet Mildmay, and do beseech him to hold her as his own daughter and to guard and cherish her as such. The aforesaid are my last bequests and wishes, subject so far as legacies to servants and relations as are contained in my last will and testament. Dated the — day of —, 18—. As witness my hand.

"(Signed) JOHN MILDMAI.

"Witnesses {HENRY MATTHEWS,

"MARY MATTHEWS."

A solemn and profound silence followed the last words of this singular document.

The captain was the first to break it.

"I—I—" he said, with evident emotion and embarrassment, "this takes me greatly by surprise," and he put his white handkerchief to his eyes as he turned to Violet. "My dear Miss Mildmay—"

He stopped, unable, apparently, to proceed.

Violet's eyes were suffused with tears, called up by the tender, loving terms in which her dear father had alluded to her.

Mr. Thaxton looked gravely from one to the other, and examined the document.

"Is it in my brother's handwriting?" asked Mrs. Mildmay.

"Yes, madam," said Mr. Beal. "The late Mr. Mildmay's handwriting, I should say, undoubtedly. Would you like to examine it?"

He handed it as he spoke, and Mrs. Mildmay, with a flood of tears, admitted that it was her brother's writing.

Violet had not wished to see it, but it was given to her now, and she looked at it long and earnestly, returning it without a word.

"It is only my duty to state," said Mr. Thaxton, after a moment's silence, "that this document is singularly informal, and that it could be set aside—I do not say that there exists any wish to set it aside—but I say that it would not, in my opinion, hold good in a Court of Equity."

"Just so," said Mr. Beal, with legal solemnity.

"You say that it is my father's handwriting?" asked Violet.

"I should say so. Yes, certainly," said Mr. Beal.

Mr. Thaxton remained silent.

"What is your opinion, Mr. Thaxton?" asked the captain.

"I have formed none at present," said the lawyer, quietly. "I have not examined the document sufficiently to do so. I know that it was an oft-expressed wish of the late Mr. Mildmay that his daughter should be placed under your guardianship."

"And it is so set down," said Violet, rising, with her usual decision. "My father's will is mine!" She held out her hand to the captain, with a sad, gentle smile. "He has assigned me to your charge, and I resign myself. Will you undertake that responsibility? Will you be the guardian of the daughter of your dead friend?"

The captain took the little thin hand and bent over it, while his tears—by some miraculous effort—dropped on it.

"I will," he breathed, struggling with his emotion.

"I will cherish you, as he says, as if you were my own!"

(To be continued.)

TREASURE-TROVE.

"My fate is coming over the sea. I sit here and watch for it."

"Are you crazy, Cora?"

"No, no more than other people. Every one is more or less so, they say. I believe in impressions, and this one is a steadfast companion of mine. It's coming, and look, now!"

Out of the mist, hanging low on the horizon, into the brightness streaming from a rift in the western clouds, came a little schooner, standing in for the shore swiftly and silently.

Her companions watched her, the girl with grave, awe-struck face. Then they rose and strolled down towards the beach.

"Do you really believe that shabby old thing brings your fate, Cora?" asked the young man with whom she had been conversing.

"Don't laugh at me!" she answered, uneasily.

A lithe, keen man, who had alighted from the vessel was now coming up the road, and, as he approached them, touched his hat, and asked the way to the village.

"The village is just ahead. You can see it," answered Morton, gruffly, jealous of any one who even looked at his companion.

The young man laughed lightly.

"Are all the natives of your coast so inhospitable?" he said. Then taking off his hat, he bowed gracefully to Cora and passed on.

Walking slowly home, Cora picked up an India-rubber case, seemingly waterproof and air-tight. What made her conceal it from Morton?

That night, in her own room at the hotel she opened it. Within lay, on a bed of night-black velvet, a pearl set in a necklace of quite wonderful size and beauty. It lit the whole room with its soft, snowy, lustrous glory. Surely this was the pearl of great price, which the merchant, hearing of, sold all that he had and gladly bought. Whence came it, this tenderness dissolved, and floating calmly in a sea of milk—this thrill of love caught and dimpled into a luscious sphere?

Its charming beams floated round Cora as she turned it this way and that, almost awe-struck at the pale, precious loveliness. She held it against her forehead, looking at herself in the glass, remembering that the ladies of the Orient allow no other gem to touch their soft skins. Diamonds? Why, a diamond would be vulgar, blatant, flaunting, self-asserting beside this regal, shining calm like the effortless richness of a oil-cup.

Entranced, she hung over the dreamy foam-bell for a long hour.

She was a firm believer in subtle, unknown influences and talismans, as well as many old beliefs that science is now picking up from the mire of contempt and setting as fixed stars in the firmament of fact, and as the filmy-eyed thing looked up at her she felt, or thought she felt, a singular fascination, a pulling at some bond. Its life was partly animal—through sympathy it had become charged with the electric passion, thrilling the warm, white, heaving bosoms whereon it had lain, and quivering the, perhaps, crowned brows its sunny splendour had lit! No cold, pitiless mineral secretion this; no dazzling, gorgeous diamond from Brazilian steppes or glittering, snaky emerald. Its very birth into the world of light had been amid the throes and the eagerness of human passion as the half-starved Indian rose panting and quivering from the depths and flung it on Ceylon's rock, reddened with his life-blood. Human sympathies! human magnetism! Yes!

Cora shivered, and, rising, put it determinedly away.

On the broad piazza of the hotel next day Cora Parks encountered the stranger.

"I am so glad to meet you!" she exclaimed. "Did you know you lost something down near the landing yesterday?"

His eye dwelt on her with a smile.

"I am afraid I did. Did you find it?"

"Yes."

"And will you keep it safely?"

"Keep it! No, indeed. It is too valuable."

"Thanks. I thought it but a poor offering."

"What can you mean? Such a jewel as that must be of immense value."

"You are too kind! You are too kind!"

"Of what I lost yesterday. Its vacant place is here," laying his hand on his breast.

His manner was earnest, even grave; and Cora was provoked to find her blushes rising at those idle compliments.

Meanwhile, Morton Way, leaning against a pillar, saw the stranger's hand on his breast, and grew more jealous than ever.

"I am talking," Cora resumed, "of what I found yesterday;" and she described the superb ornament with enthusiasm, heightened by the tinge of superstition she felt.

"And did you think I dropped that?" asked the other.

"Didn't you? Didn't you drop it?" exclaimed Cora. "I thought, of course, you did."

He laughed, as if the idea was too absurd.

"I am sorry to say, my dear lady, I must disclaim all title to it."

"It is very strange," said Cora. "It could have been lost only from this house, if you did not drop it. No one in the village owns it, I know."

She was walking by his side now, this man, whose name even she did not know; and confidence and sympathy seemed to come as naturally as possible.

They stopped at the end of the piazza, leaning against the balustrade, he looking over her head.

Suddenly he said:

"There is a beautiful effect on yonder cloud! A little this way, and you'll catch it."

But he turned her, not towards it, but so that any one at the other end of the piazza could see the long and fervent pressure he gave her hand.

And Morton Way saw it, and his jealousy grew tenfold more intense.

In less than a week Augustus Du Pré, for that was the stranger's name, had become a success.

He waited like a dream, and sent a boat through the water like a university stroke-oar. He had such great versatility that all declared he could go down into the kitchen and cook the dinner exquisitely.

"Billiard-marker or thimble-rigger, I am not certain which," sneered Morton Way, jealous of Du Pré's attentions to Cora.

Mrs. Starkie, the reigning lady of the house, declared:

"I know all these people well—the Du Prés. A good stock. Huguenots."

About these Huguenot ancestors Du Pré himself used to tell a story, with an inconsistent gleam on his usually gay, good-natured face.

His great-great-grandfather, Des Adrots, had appeared before a French fortress in the time of Henry III., parched for revenge. The castle surrendered, but he ran out a plank from the battlements, and the garrison, man by man, was driven out upon it, and over it, Des Adrots, sitting below, watching the ghastly heap as it rose, and shouting to the victims to make haste as they shivered at the hideous leap.

This pleasant story Du Pré would tell, as if quite entering into the personality of the Huguenot captain, though one would have deemed him more at home helping the widowed Tolandee and the fatherless Aimée to raise amid their tears one of Marot's psalms.

"Don't make a hero of him, girls," Mrs. Starkie repeated, in vain.

He had something misty and mysterious about him, and what young girl but acknowledges the spell of the mysterious? Even Cora, though at heart true to Morton Way, felt something of this strange attraction.

"If I wait will you show me your treasure?" he said one night to Cora Parks.

She went and brought the pearl.

"It is treasure-trove," he said. "You have the rights of the lady of the house. You have never succeeded in discovering its origin—its owner?"

"Never, and I've tried every way."

"It is very beautiful. You will always keep it?"

The girl paused a moment; then she said, almost solemnly:

"I will. There is a glamour about it to me. I always knew my fate would come over the sea."

A week or two afterwards Augustus Du Pré was arranging some private theatricals. He offered one of the best parts to Morton Way, who refused it. Du Pré urged him.

"No," he said, "these things are not in my way," and then, raising his voice, repeated, "Not in my way. I, for one, am not a strolling player."

There was no mistaking the intended insult. A smile ran round the circle of young men often eclipsed by the stranger.

Augustus never opened his lips, but that night he went to Cora Parks and begged her, as a particular favour, to wear her necklace at the ball the next night.

How resplendent she looked with it! Du Pré met her with a deep bow of thanks and a tender smile.

Morton Way started forward and gazed. He saw the look of intelligence—his gift, he doubted not, and accepted and worn? Ay, Cora Parks, the sea has brought you your fate!

Morton Way turned and went out.

"She is false to me," he cried. "She loves this stranger. Shall I stop to be made a mock of by her and him? Never!"

The glowing windows of the ball-room flared out on the sands their far-reaching parallelograms of light—the long, shooting rays pursued him; it was long before he could get out of reach of them and the music.

"Those vulgar waltzes!" he murmured.

But at last he walked alone, breathing the east wind.

In those moments of mad jealousy he cast the old life behind him.

"Do you know that Mr. Way has gone?" said Mr. Seaver, the next day. "Something he said last night made me renew the offer I made to him to go to Quina. Our house has a branch there, you know. He left before daybreak, and will be on his road in a week."

Augustus Du Pré cast down his eyes with a gleam in them which might have set well on his Huguenot ancestor. But Cora, who stood by, thought she should faint.

"Come this way, my dear," said Mrs. Starkie to her. "My crotchet needs your assistance," and she led the girl down the beach.

Mrs. Starkie was a romantic old lady, in spite of her being wise and keen. People came to her about everything because she had kept her power of sympathy.

This morning she put her hand on Cora's shoulder, questioning whether she should lead her to relieve her overcharged heart by tears and confidence or avoid clothing the vague with definite shape and hue and sting.

Cora saw that the secret was betrayed, and answered:

"It is better not to talk of it."

"Well, my dear, you can judge best," said her friend, very gently.

Cora sat still, looking off over the ocean. The tide was running out, the moaning of the groundswell beat the ear with added distinctness, and each treacherous wave, as it burst and hurried back farther from her feet than the last, seemed to wash all hope farther off and leave the bare, vivid fact glaring alone.

All at once she turned and said, hopelessly:

"He is gone!"

Then the old eyes overflowed, and Mrs. Starkie drew her young friend's head down on her bosom and pressed her in her arms.

But Cora struggled free.

"No, no," said she, "we had better not talk about it."

Suddenly she grasped Mrs. Starkie's arm.

"There is one more chance. Look there!"

Mrs. Starkie looked and saw a well-known figure stepping stately along the beach, taking his morning walk. It was Mr. Seaver.

"What do you mean, child?"

"He—he," stammered Cora, in her excitement, "could let him know that—that I found that pearl I had on; that it was no lover's gift. There is—there is another chance," and she sprang up and stood on the sparkling sands, her whole life in her eyes and panting chest. "Augustus Du Pré could tell him! He knows!"

"Then it was not his gift?"

"No. Did you think it was? But tell me, shall I ask them? Which?"

"Don't ask Augustus Du Pré. As for Mr. Seaver, I don't know him well, but I believe him to be an honourable gentleman. It would be better if he were forty-five, instead of thirty-five."

She paused, and scrutinized the handsome form, in perfect seaside costume, whose lofty carriage

bore him toward them, while he surveyed the solemn, limitless ocean, as if it were a good institution, very proper to be patronised in the season. Cora also watched, open-mouthed and breathless, that measured tread. It seemed the tread of fate.

At length Mrs. Starkie said:

"Go! I would for you, but you can do it better."

Like an arrow from the bow Cora shot away.

Mr. Seaver was startled from his cigar and self-possession by her flying up to him, her scarlet shawl streaming behind her like a flame.

"Good gracious! What is the matter?" he cried.

"I—I only wanted to ask you something—"

And then Cora stopped, and flushed a deeper red, and put her hand wildly to her forehead. How could she—how could she do it? Oh, if the incoming wave could snatch her away on its green bosom!

"What can I do for you, Miss Park?" came from the wondering Mr. Seaver.

She looked round then, and spoke harshly and quickly.

"You—you know where Mr. Way has gone?"

"I do."

"Will you let him know that the pearl necklace I wore last night was found, and not given to me? You must give him this message, if you do give it, as from yourself. I cannot send it to him. He never told me he cared what I wore. But, oh! pardon me, and pity me!" and she covered her burning face with both her hands.

"Pardon you, my dear Miss Park," returned Mr. Seaver, repressing, in the most well-bred manner, all show of surprise. "I can only feel flattered by this proof of confidence;" but he did not look at all flattered. "I perfectly understand. I will do what you wish, and I think you may trust me to do it so as not to compromise your delicacy."

Cora turned without uncovering her face, and fled straight back to Mrs. Starkie, while Mr. Seaver pursued his stroll.

It was done, the unaimed, immediate thing, as Cora called it long before she reached Mrs. Starkie.

Mr. Seaver was an honourable gentleman. Yes, to his own sex. Toward women the code is different; and yet that, after all, is the test of the true metal.

Before he had reached the limit of his excursion he had about decided it was not worth while to give in to such nonsense! He had set his own eye on Miss Parks.

He repassed the friends, raising his hat, without ever looking towards them. They appreciated his delicacy. If they had only known his thought!

Ah, pallid pearl! did Cora hurry thee indignantly out of sight? No, she wondered she did not hate it, as the days and weeks passed and brought no tidings; but it seemed nearer to her than ever.

Itself was a trophy of patience, for it owed existence to a wound so covered and so cured. It was the tangible poetry of pain, the glory born from suffering. Oh, beautiful, meek type! Oh, lustrous bescon!

As for Du Pré, he left the hotel soon after Morton Way. He had become hateful to Cora, for she regarded him as the cause of her lover's departure, and she could not conceal her dislike. In a few weeks Cora also left. A year passed. Its silent, resistless fingers pressed and shaped Cora's spirit. Was her calm born of self-control, or of a nature not tense and strong enough to meet and vibrate to such smiting?

At the end of the year Mr. Seaver offered himself. She hesitated awhile, and then accepted, saying:

"It might as well be him as anyone now!"

A perfect afternoon was waiting to be clothed in its royal garments of purple, just over the gleaming maples of Mr. Seaver's stately residence, when he came suddenly out of the grove behind his wife. That afternoon she had put on the necklace; why she did not know.

"My dear," he said, "you have been sitting motionless for an hour. May I beg to know what you have been thinking of?"

Mrs. Seaver started, and put her hand over her breast, as if guarding something. She said, confusedly:

"I don't know. One's thoughts are their own."

Said Mr. Seaver:

"I beg your pardon! They are mine. I do not often assert my rights, but there is such a thing as loyalty of spirit and imagination. A true wife sets up no image but her husband."

Cora sent an instinctive glance around, as if for an opening of escape from slavery.

No, there was no escape. Mr. Seaver had become passionately fond of his wife; and these reserved, smothered, volcanic natures are so tinglingly conscious of the flood of tenderness they hide so tightly that they feel savagely injured if they don't get full return, and therefore are very unpleasant pieces of house furniture.

From this day—Cora remembered afterwards that she had on the necklace—she was made to feel the full weight of her chain, until Mr. Seaver's death.

Our story goes off to China. It is difficult for a woman to realize or describe how one really and truly wounded, struck to the heart in the love which is the most intimate part of his being, the very life of his life, can yet eagerly and ardently pursue and capture other interests.

But men will not need my description to understand how Morton Way threw himself heartily into the race for wealth, and was stirred greatly by the new objects of sight and thought around. It was a busy existence he lived among the Celestials, with their subtlety, their fawning, their provoking patience, their mindless industry, with its petty objects and incompleteness.

No Caucasian ever gets into sympathy with them. In missionary circles he thought to meet the converted on common ground; but they made him think of the Fiji, to whom a missionary once spoke of his predecessor, calling him "a good and tender man." "Yes," replied the convert, reflectively, "he was very good and very tender, I ate a piece of him."

Six years had passed, when Morton lay, one afternoon, on a bamboo lounge, musing his calculations with knit brows, fan in hand, and the inevitable cup of tea within reach. Success threw aside the curtains of her shrine and stepped out on his path; but, as he gazed through the oleanders, out on the tiresome, never-ending rice-fields, an infinite weariness took possession of him. He seemed to form part of an absurd phantasm. It grew dark; and he lay and watched the enormous fire-flies, circling among the white chrysanthemums, and he heard the booming of the huge cicadas, and the fantastic gongs and drums from the junks on the river, and the endless sputtering of the people in the streets, till he rose, with an eastward gaze and purpose fixed.

His partner lifted hands and eyes and voice, but nothing could alter him. In a fortnight he was on his way home. Home! What had it for him?

A pale, beautiful widow, in half-mourning, sat on the beach of her old seaside resort. It was Mrs. Seaver.

"Why so grave?" asked her friends.

"I am superstitious," she replied. "Never have I put on this necklace without something of importance happening to me; without its turning a leaf in the book of my fate. I found it many years ago."

"You found it?" almost shouted Morton Way, darting out from behind a rock.

He stood over her for a moment, his eyes drinking hers up, then he shot back again.

The circle noticed with surprise that Mrs. Seaver showed no astonishment, but the loveliest, freshest blush lit her whole face.

"Come," said one, "it's getting damp."

"I'll finish my chapter first," Mrs. Seaver said, taking up the book on her lap.

There was another chapter to be finished.

"Wear the necklace! wear the pearl necklace!" pleaded Morton Way, the next day.

"I am too pale now," said Mrs. Seaver; but she fingered it tenderly as she put it on.

It, too, had caught its pallor from long hearkening in a dark prison-house for the words "Let there be light!" and how gratefully now its happy shining gave back the gift, dimpling into charming wavelets of radiance. Its purity was not unconscious or untried, but rather like that of a soul which has come, through much tribulation, to make its robe "white as no fuller or cloth can white them." Oh, was not this the pearl which, with its essence expanded and perfected, will form a gate of the crystal city?

Had not Mrs. Seaver cause for superstition when, as she sat that day at the extremity of a ledge of rocks, a step behind her made her turn and behold her old acquaintance, Augustus Du Pré?

He had not the frank, exacting manner of old; but a worried, contracted look, as he gazed absently down on the tawny sands, on the wet side of the fishing-boats, flashing back the sun as brightly as ever boat on Venetian lagoon, and on the old dock, little rustier or shabbier than ten years before.

Why should she feel any astonishment? Mrs. Seaver asked herself. There was nothing so very odd about meeting him again; and this time he had come in no mysterious way, but simply by the ordinary train and at the customary hour. Yet she could not help the feeling that his life and hers had been for ten years rounding into this occurrence with fatal certainty, drawn by the pearl, by a magnetism making the failure in an unknown and unconscious trust impossible.

She put up her hands, and lifted it, for it felt cold and heavy on her neck; and while her fingers pressed it she learned that Augustus Du Pré had come for it. How long it had seemed hers, pecu-

liarily hers, most tenderly hers now, bound to her by both loss and pain; but in an instant her spirit's hold on it relaxed, all sense of ownership melted away like snow, though she thought it right to ask for some proof.

"It was absolutely necessary," said Du Pré, "to cut all connection between me and the necklace at that time. It is a long story. I cannot go over it. But if I can show you something about it you have never discovered, show you a secret spring, and tell you what is underneath, will you believe me?"

"Yes, I will believe you. You know I thought you dropped it."

He placed his finger on a spring.

"Under this is a lock of gray hair, and the monogram and the motto."

It was as he had said.

"But, ha! What, what is this?" he exclaimed.

On the pearl a bluish, sickly tint was perceptible. Du Pré examined it carefully. Drops stood on his forehead. He turned pale with that sort of green pallor olive complexions sometimes exhibit.

"What is it? What is the matter?" cried Mrs. Seaver.

Du Pré stood perfectly still, looking at it, his face rigid, his lips presently drawing away from his teeth with a very sinister expression. Then he raised his head, and looked off to sea, and said, grimly:

"So, that's past!"

"What is it? Tell me!" urged Mrs. Seaver.

"Do you see that blue, livid tinge? It is the beginning of decay. In a short time the pearl will crumble to powder. It is worthless."

"Can nothing be done to help it?"

"Nothing! It is doomed."

The two stood long silent and grave on that black rock, with the scream of the sea-gull in their ear, and above them torn, lurid clouds sweeping along, and imaging their fiery flying in the leaping waves below.

"Well," said Augustus Du Pré, "it grappled itself to humanity, and so must share the fate of humanity. I'll tell you its history—part of it; and he sat down on a heap of stones, took the dying thing in his hands, and began its monody in a dogged tone.

"Yes; everywhere it has been married to human passion. They say it belonged to Mary Queen of Scots, who wore it when she sat by Darnley's bed an hour before he lay dead beneath the stars; wore it till, in the honest shadow of death, she gave it to one of her own women, who carried it back to France; and, somehow, Mademoiselle, the great Mademoiselle, Madame de Sévigné's Mademoiselle, got it, and presented it to her handsome lover, Lauzun. It was set in a ring then, and saw many a gay scene, I warrant you. Then it drifted to Germany, and was sent to a fair baroness, to summon her to a scaffold, where her high-hearted lord died for a crime of hers; and, again, it acted as a token to bring a mother to the cradle, where her first-born, supposed to be dead, smiled up in her face, and stretched out his baby hands for the gem. Once it was picked out of the mire and gore, after a scarlet flame of cavalry had streamed up a green English hill-side, and the leader had fallen to dust and darkness. A rejoicing father hung it as a thank-offering round the neck of an image of the Virgin, whence my Huguenot ancestors—But no matter. In everything—battle, worship, love, grief, and death—it has mingled, so they say. Silly fancies, half of them. I could add another of its magical powers; couldn't you? My magnetism is keen enough to tell me that when I touch it."

"I'll forgive it all the rest for the last thing it did for me," said Cora.

Du Pré looked up at her darkly.

"Well! there were two of them once. One found fate in Sir Thomas Gresham's cup of sack, when he drank the health of his maiden queen. That was a fifteen-thousand-pound drink. This one, as I say, came over here with my great-grandfather, and was buried with his plate at the Revolution. My old grandfather used to tell how it beamed out when the ground was re-opened, like the moon coming out of an eclipse. And lately, it has—No! Let that stay a secret for ever," and he ground his teeth. "This blue water is fathomless here, beside the rock. Look!" And he opened the hand which held the pearl. "The deep as its own again!"

A moment more and Du Pré was gone.

Another moment and Morton Way had joined Cora from the cliff above. Perhaps he had not liked the looks of that confidential tableau. As they stood there, the sunlight, which had lain in the trough of the sea, between two well-lifted ridges, with that dusky, powerful splendour that "burns like gold, and bathes like blood," suddenly melted into soft, sweet rose-colour, lighting up their faces, the rough stones around, the dark swirls of seaweed, and the yellow foam frothing at their feet.

They turned, and far in the green, eastern horizon streamed tender crimson banners, prophets and harbingers of the morrow's glad uprising; and in that glorified light they walked up the path together.

A. G.

WM understand that the Duke of Beaufort has consented to become President of the Musical Artists Society.

It is stated that "the appearance of a strange fish, said to be three hundred feet long, and resembling the celebrated sea-serpent, is reported from Lough Swilly."

TERRIBLE EARTHQUAKE IN SOUTH AMERICA.—It is reported that an appalling earthquake has lately taken place on the Venezuelan frontier of New Grenada. The destruction was severest in the Valley of Cucuta, in the province of Pamplona, latitude 7 deg., 30 min. N., longitude 72 deg. 10 min. W. It is said that 16,000 lives are lost by the calamity.

It is announced that an ingenious idea is soon to be put into execution in Paris. A speculative individual proposes to place in all the tobacco shops umbrellas to be hired out at a modest price—a small sum being required as a deposit, until the umbrella be returned. In fact, about the same system will be pursued as is at present carried out in theatres and other places of amusement by persons who let opera-glasses.

A LIFE-PRESERVING PILLOW.—A new life-preserving device, which seems to be both simple and practical, has recently been introduced in the Glasgow and Montreal line of emigration steamers. It consists of two pillows of prepared cork wood, with an upper padding of hair covered with mattress tick. The pillows are attached to each other in such a manner that, when about to be used, they can be placed one on the back and the other on the chest and tied, the head and shoulders thus being kept above water. The device has been tested and has been found capable of supporting the heaviest men breast-high. The pillows are utilized as articles of bedding, so that they are always at hand in case of danger.

"I WANT TO DO THE HONOURABLE THING."

This is the declaration with which certain kinds of young men usually close their letters of inquiry to us. The inquiry is generally as to how they can get rid of keeping their plighted faith. A young man makes love to a girl, promises to marry her, gets her promise to "wait for him," and then happening to see another girl that he thinks he likes better, he begins to cast about for excuses to break his promise to the girl whose love he has sought and won. This kind of young man always pretends that he "wants to do the right thing." Sometimes, after deserting his first love, and engaging himself to a second, he sees a third girl that he likes best of all. Then he is sure that it is his duty to give up the second; but still he "wants to do the honourable thing." Such a man has no true idea of honour or of love. He is a fickle, selfish, untrustworthy, dishonourable creature. It is a misfortune for a girl to have anything to do with him, and a calamity for her to marry him.

HOW MERIT IS REWARDED IN THE EGYPTIAN ARMY.—Kassim Pasha, when Minister of War for Egypt, was very particular in regard to the personal appearance of his officers, and issued stringent orders that they should never appear unshaven in public. One day he met upon the streets a lieutenant who had bearded the pasha and disregarded his order. "To what regiment do you belong?" demanded the indignant minister. "To the — Regiment at Abassuh," responded the frightened lieutenant. "Get into my carriage at once, so that I can carry you to the encampment, and have you publicly punished," was the stern command which followed. The young man obeyed, and the wain rode along gloomily for some time, when the Pasha stopped his carriage and entered a shop for a few moments, to make some trifling purchase. Seizing the opportunity, the culprit sprang the vehicle, darted into a neighbouring barber's stall, and regained his post before the return of his jailer, minus his beard. For the remainder of the route the officer buried his face in his hands and seemed the picture of apprehension. Abassuh was reached at last, and all the officers were assembled to witness the degradation of their comrade, who all the while kept in the rear of his chief. "Come forward," cried out the irate pasha, when there stepped before him an officer with a face as clean as a baby's, and a look of the most supreme innocence. His excellency gave one long look of blank astonishment, and then, with an appreciative smile breaking over his hitherto features, turned to the assembled officers and said, "Here, gentlemen, your old minister is a fool, and your young lieutenant is a captain."

MR. F. BUCKLAND, inspector of salmon fisheries, is at present engaged inquiring into the crab, lobster, and coast fisheries of Norfolk, with a view of ascer-

taining what regulations it would be advisable to adopt for the better development of those fisheries.

THE SECRET OF POMEROYS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Shifting Sands," "The Secret Link," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XXVI.

And often, when no real ills affright,
The visionary fiends, an endless train,
Assail with equal or superior might,
And through the throbbing heart and dizzy brain
And shivering nerves shoot stings of more than mortal pain.

EUSTACE NEVILLE still lingered at the castle, in spite of the cold welcome that he had met with from his host, and the scant courtesy that rather permitted than wished his prolonged stay.

But Melanie's saddened looks and earnest eyes were perhaps an irresistible argument with one who possessed such deep gratitude to the fair niece of General Pomeroy.

"I cannot go—I will not leave you," he said one day to the passive, subdued girl, after a constrained permission rather than invitation had been given to him to remain.

Melanie understood him.

Her pale cheeks deepened in hue at the half-involuntary words.

"You must not be surprised, you must forgive my poor uncle, his whole brain is fevered and he is unjust to us all just now."

"Not to you—surely not to you?" repeated the guest, eagerly.

Melanie gave a faint smile at the sudden impetuosity of his manner.

"Perhaps not; my uncle is uniformly kind and forbearing to me, but still there is a change and I cannot wonder at his impatience of all but one subject."

"It is true—most true," returned the young man, quickly. "And if matters were different, if I were an old friend or even his equal in rank, I would smile at the petulance. But now—his inferior in social position and an enforced inmate of his household—it is different now, so different," he pursued, sadly. "Yet, Melanie, for you and your sake I would encounter all."

The faint, lovely blush that mantled on the girl's delicate cheeks betrayed the earnestness of the words and manner was scarcely lost to the senses of the fair listener.

Perhaps he perceived it. Perhaps the idea that he was either too presuming, or misunderstood, came on him like a flash of lightning.

Did it reveal the truth? or was it a warm impulse that had carried him beyond his real wishes and feeling?

That was a question that, at the moment, could scarcely have been answered by either of the persons concerned at that agitating moment.

Melanie, as is so often with her sex, was the first to recover her self-possession.

"It is very kind of you," she said. "I quite understand the generous sympathy of your motives. Alas! I am afraid I have not the courage to bid you go and forget all our misfortune. Yet I ought to do so, perhaps, in common justice. It is of no use if he—poor Basil, is gone."

She did not weep as she spoke, but a violent shudder ran through her whole frame, despite her utmost efforts at self-control.

Eustace saw it all, and his heart warmed in almost reverent sympathy, that would have been a dangerous freemasonry to disengaged hearts.

"May I ask—will you forgive the presuming question?" he murmured. "But it will influence my future actions. Melanie—Miss Pomeroy—did you—do you lament the absent one as a cousin, an almost brother, whose loss is a grievous but not insufferable blank?" he questioned, earnestly. "Or was it in a yet dearer relation that he stood to you, and which makes it a dreadful and well nigh crushing bereavement?"

"Why? What makes you ask?" inquired the girl, with an averted face.

"To quicken my exertions, to spur me to yet more eager pursuit—nerves me to yet deeper sacrifices," he said. "Ah, Melanie, I owe you life in any case, but if Basil Pomeroy is not bound to you by closer ties than mere relationship I would willingly lay down my own existence for your sake. If not—if he is only as a brother-cousin, I would guard you with my watchful patience till you have another protector, even if my life were an absolute toil to my desolate soul."

The tears rushed into the beautiful eyes of the orphan.

"If you were any one else I should refuse to reply to so strange a question," she returned, with

a struggling, wan smile. "But I believe you; I do not think you would insult me by mere curiosity. Basil is to me a dear cousin, a dear, precious brother. He would not have dreamed of me in any other relationship," she went on, in a low voice.

"Nor you?" rose to the young man's lips. But the sense of the cruelty of the frank eagerness checked his impetuous desire to learn the truth, for which he could scarcely have accounted to himself.

"It is surprising," he murmured. "It seems so impossible that it should be otherwise. So blind, so stupefied!"

Melanie did not hear, or at any rate did not seem to comprehend the words. But in a few moments her attention was, as it were forced to the real state of her companion's sentiments.

"Ah, yes; if I had been less infatuated—if I had seen you earlier, read you more truly, then no power—no obstacle should have crushed me back; nothing but your own prohibition should have sent me from your side, sweet, generous, noble Melanie!"

It was a sudden, ay, and a strange outburst, and one that could scarcely find reply.

Melanie could scarcely accept nor reject such a declaration.

She hastened, rather, to check and change the subject.

"It is not for us to speak of me, but of you and my poor cousin," she said, hastily. "Mr. Neville, if I did not trust you and believe you good and noble, I could never, never allow any such words from you. Please never touch on such useless subjects again," she went on, hurriedly.

"Yes, I must—I must, if only to clear myself from the appearance of insolence," he said. "I never dreamed that you would have been won—that you would have listened to the presumptuous suit of a poor, obscure and nameless man," he continued, impatiently. "But at least I could have striven for the prize, and gloried rather in the failure than the ignoble weakness that dared not appreciate its worth. But as it is," he murmured, sadly, "as it is I dare not. I am fettered, grovelling to the very earth as a captive."

She did not inquire the meaning of such enigmatical words.

Strange to say, they were the first expressions of love she had heard.

Beautiful and well dowered and graceful, she was so young, her life had been so secluded and her future destiny so decided by her guardian uncle, that no one had as yet ventured to murmur the usual tender compliments lavished on such fair debutantes for love and admiration.

And no wonder that the noble, tender tones—the manly avowal of such a hopeless but devoted love should have made her heart thrill and her eyes moisten with grateful emotion.

"There is no question of either presumption or of hope," she said, softly. "You have said yourself that it is impossible, and I know you are right. Let this be forgotten now to give us confidence in each other. You will ever be my trusted, valued friend. It will be such a blessing to me," she added, looking up in his face with such child-like sweetness that he could have forgotten all and clasped her to his heart and cast the shelter of his arms around her to ward off the very winds of heaven from her fragile frame.

But he remembered the pledge; he recoiled from the very shadow of insult to one so young and fair and inexperienced.

"Be it so," he returned, "I accept the pledge, and, what is more, I will never forfeit your confidence, by word or look, till I can openly and fearlessly explain all that may appear suspicious. You will not doubt me?" he went on. "You will not believe any malicious tales of me or my past life? I am innocent as yourself Melanie, innocent of all," he went on, with a strange vehemence.

She did not comprehend nor scarcely heed him then.

But in after days the remembrance of his words recurred to her with a perplexing influence as to faith and trust in one whose prejudice against the prophet of future evil.

"I am utterly unconscious of what you can mean," she said, falteringly; "but be certain I will never forget the kindness, never the generous sympathy in my trouble. Now let us be friends, only friends," she returned, holding out her hand with simple trust.

He paused, pressed it in both his, there was a slight movement as if he would have raised it to his lips.

But he checked himself in time, and quickly relinquished the small fingers in his clasp.

"Melanie, I shall not quit the neighbourhood on any pretext whatever till you may need me no longer," he said, in a firmer and more constrained

tone. "But I think it may be better for me to leave the castle now for a time. I can see my presence only irritates your uncle rather than affords him any comfort. I shall go to Heatherbrae, and when I have just comprehended the state of matters I will either return hither and boldly offer myself to the general as an envoy or else take up my abode near to his where I can watch over you unseen. But in any case I shall arrange for some communication between us at your pleasure. The hand and the head will be devoted to your service, sweet Melanie."

She smiled gratefully as he turned from her, but he had well nigh reached the door ere her sweet voice sounded softly in his ear.

"Mr. Neville—Eustace—do not risk your own safety," she whispered. "It would but add to my desolation. For my sake, be careful. I cannot afford to lose another friend."

It was irresistible.

He bent down, touched her fair brow with his lips and then sprang away, all unconscious that a pair of glittering eyes had witnessed the innocent freedom of the sacred caress.

CHAPTER XXVII.

EUSTACE took his way slowly through the plantations that skirted the grounds of Heatherbrae, after dismissing the dog-cart which brought him to the park.

He shrank, perhaps, from immediate contact with the friends he had left in his present mood.

The cynical address of Ivan Leslie and the coquettish of Zoe Danvers were scarcely more dreaded than the wondering, eager queries of Lady Lennox or the practical comments of her husband.

It had been all so sudden and so mysterious, and his feelings to sweet Melanie were as yet too strongly mingled for him to like the light allusions to the events in commonplaces, indifferent talk.

And though he would scarcely admit it to himself, there was a sense of bondage which should never have influenced the high and manly spirit.

"I will tell her it is impossible, would it be driven to such a point. I will strive to atone for any foolish, useless trifling," he thought. "And she must see, she must know the madness of the thought," he went on, in a half-audible monologue, that might well betray his presence even if the words were not to be distinguished.

But he did not, in his pre-occupation, notice the faint rustle of female dress, nor even the rustle of the evergreen bushes through which he forced his way.

And it was with a start of guilty surprise that he suddenly, on a sharp turn in the path, came in sudden contact with Zoe Danvers.

Both of them stood regarding each other in mute emotion at the unexpected meeting.

Zoe's face flushed up with uncontrollable gladness, that was hardly reflected, by that of her companion.

But she did not heed it then in the fresh joy of seeing him safe and free from the dangerous toils of the beautiful Melanie, she did not mark the uneasy embarrassment of his manner as he responded to her extended hand, and the eager, though half-smothered exclamation.

"Eustace, how thankful I am. What a happiness to see you again!"

"You are very good," he said, hesitatingly. "It was a stupid way of risking my neck and giving trouble to my friends, but it is all over now, and not worth another allusion to it," he went on, hurriedly, as if anxious to avoid any discussion on a painful and dangerous subject.

But Zoe would not be thus diverted from her purpose.

"It is very well—perhaps most kindly meant on your part—to avoid such a painful allusion, Eustace, but I cannot thus allow it to pass. I must ask your pardon for my folly; I must tell how I have suffered in agonies of remorse and terror for your life."

"You were very kind to bestow such trouble on my unworthy self," he said, half-impatiently. "However, it is all past now. I am quite well, and probably much wiser for my trouble. And," he continued, gravely, "there has been so much more serious a calamity since that it is well nigh absurd to even speak of my insignificant self."

"Then you have not forgiven me; you speak so harshly," she returned, pleadingly. "Whatever may be the present emergency or grief at the castle it cannot concern me so nearly as yours in which I had so wretched a share. At least while alone we may speak of it, you may accept my true penitence, you may tell me that I have not fallen in your estimation nor lost your regard, Eustace."

He turned abruptly from her.

He was conscious of a strange irritation with

her that was scarcely just, when it must be all new and incomprehensible to her why his tone should be thus changed.

Yet, on the other hand, he had resolved to cast off the spell, to assume a manly tone of candour and independence more worthy at once of himself and her.

"Zoe," he began, "there can be no such mention of pardon between us. It was a mere accident which would scarcely have happened had I been more careful, and if I had lost my life there would have been no great harm done to the community in general. If you really do think you owe me the slightest shadow of a debt, I will only ask, as a favour from you, a complete silence on a subject that is wearisome. There are many more interesting things to speak of, surely, than a broken head," he went on, with a forced smile.

"Perhaps," she returned, sadly; "but I fear not much more agreeable. All appears so very dismal and gloomy," she went on, sadly, "this miserable business of Mr. Pomeroy's disappearance, and—and other things yet more hopeless, perhaps."

"I do not understand you," he said. "Surely no misfortune has happened to you, Miss Danvers? You speak as if a very painful sorrow was over you," he added, glancing at the pale troubled face of the girl.

"It is—it is, and you are hard and cold; but I do not mind," she exclaimed, impatiently. "And I am an idiot to care what you do or what becomes of you. But I cannot help it—though I should ruin my whole prospects in life, though I may incur your suspicion and scorn, yet it must be told. Eustace, I believe—I fear you are in danger, and I am powerless to help you," she added, in a low tone.

"If," he exclaimed, "If Yes, I have been, I grant, and I might be so again; nay, I will even confess I can, maybe, risk it without much fear. But be quite at rest about me, Miss Danvers. I have no fear, and certainly nothing should induce me to blame you in the slightest degree for any risk I bring on myself."

There was a pain, a real look of troubled doubt and agony, such as Zoe's proud features could scarcely have been supposed capable of expressing.

Then she clasped her hands together hopelessly.

"You are determined—you will rush on your fate, Eustace; but at least hear all that I dare say, and then my heart will perhaps be eased of some of its agony. Will you listen and promise not to despise me for the candour?"

Never perhaps had Zoe looked more pretty, more attractive than at that moment when she had little thought of attracting, of aught, indeed, but the one engrossing sorrow that possessed her.

And had Eustace been less pre-engrossed, less confident in the wisdom and honour of his resolve, he would have been in greater danger than had yet befallen him from the dazzling charms of the proud belle.

"I can never despise candour, Miss Danvers," he said, gently, "and if you really will be relieved by placing any such confidence in me, I shall most certainly not refuse it. But is it not a useless torture to both?" he went on, gravely.

"No, no; it will not affect you, and, for me, I care not," she returned, quickly. "Eustace, I drew you on, I made you acknowledge my power; I did care for you, though I knew it was impossible to marry you. And now I am engaged, and partly for your sake, and to ensure you a friend. Do not mistake me; do not think me heartless," she went on, impatiently. "I believed I was so, but you have taught me I could love—ay, and just when it is sorrow and humiliation to me."

Eustace listened in astonishment, ay, and perhaps with an irresistible feeling of soft and pitying tenderness.

He would have been more than man if he could have seen that beautiful creature in humility and passionate love at his very feet, imploring of him pardon and appreciation of her devotion to himself.

And, unconsciously, it might be, his arm glided round her waist, and he pressed his lips for a brief moment on the tearful cheeks.

"Poor Zoe," she murmured, "do you—can you love her still? It was for your sake, dear Eustace, and we can think of each other still, and perhaps meet in after years as friends, ay, and it may be more than friends."

And again her head drooped on his shoulder, though he had by that time remembered all the risk and folly of the indulgence of a more temporary passion.

"This will never do; we must part," he said, firmly. "Try to forget, Miss Danvers, all save your happiness and honour, and you will never repeat a passing inclination for one who could not make you happy, even had you risked such a life of hardship. Farewell, in reality," he went on,

"farewell to all love and weakness. Though we may still meet as ordinary friends or acquaintances, this is a real parting."

She placed her hand in his, she gazed up into his face as if her very heart was torn by the mingled love and haughty pride within.

And then, with a checked sob and a proud, resentful recoil of the bent head, was about as it were to form the mute reply.

But just at the moment when this embarrassing interview was ended a quick rustle in the immediate vicinity brought a sudden start to the girl's frame, and a hot-blood flush even to the manly features of Eustace Neville.

And when the figure who now stood before them was fairly in view Evan Leslie faced the couple with far more tranquil indifference than could have been expected those who might be fairly supposed to have excited a storm of wrath in his breast.

"Ha, Neville, turned up at last! All right again, I suppose. Pray, what's been going on at the Castle to cause such an excitement? Your little faux pas was as nothing to it, though perhaps some folk would think there had been some connection between them," he added, carelessly, drawing Zoe's hand in his arm, and watching each turn of expression in Eustace Neville's face during the speech and action.

But the young man was fully equal to the emergency.

He quickly drew back from the least contact with his companions and prepared to pass into the house.

"It is a very strange occurrence if it turns out as fatally as is generally expected," was his reply. "But I am going to ascertain more entirely the facts of the case, now that my imprisonment is over. And if the search be in vain here, I shall carry it into distant lands," he went on, determinedly.

"You are a regular knight-errant; of course, the general will pay your expenses," replied Evan, calmly. "However, that is his affair and yours, unless in some particulars, which are I dare say unknown to you at present. However, time will explain the mysteries better than any words can do," he went on, carelessly. "Are you coming to Heatherbrae now? Shall we walk there together, Neville?" he added, significantly.

"Certainly not; I will just stroll carelessly through the back entrance, where I may probably find my small baggage. It would be extremely intrusive to accompany you," he added, sarcastically.

"Oh, Miss Danvers and I are favoured with plenty of opportunities for private talk; we need not grudge a few moments now."

"I will soon settle the dispute; I will go. I can't remain much longer; it is so cold," exclaimed Zoe, suddenly collecting her self-possession. "I presume you will not refuse me this slight favour?" she added, turning to Evan, though her eyes were fixed on his companion.

Evan bowed with mock humility.

"You are queen, fair Zoe, and indeed it may be better that you should be absent while Mr. Neville and I exchange confidences. Even your charming sex may at times be in the way where business is concerned."

Zoe hesitated. There was a kind of demon look in her betrothed suitor's eyes that might be meant for herself or for his rival.

But at least it warned her she had gone far enough in her proceedings, and a vague terror of the consequences both for herself and Eustace suddenly seized upon her.

"Evan, you will remember; you will not forfeit your promise?" she whispered.

"Not unless you force me to the unpleasant necessity," he replied. "Zoe, be wise, lest you provoke me further."

And the next moment the girl sprang away till out of sight of the companion rivals, and then she slackened her speed as if desirous of lingering near enough to the scene for a quick information of its result.

Scarcely had the sound of her footfall disappeared ere Eustace said, haughtily:

"Mr. Leslie, if what I believe to be the truth as to your relations to Miss Danvers is correct, it is perhaps due to you to assure you we met entirely by accident, and that I distinctly deny the slightest intention or wish to interfere in the slightest degree between you either in feeling or in fact."

Evan laughed carelessly.

"My dear fellow, I am not at all uneasy; you are scarcely in a position to inspire much alarm just now; even if I were more jealously in love than I can feel inclined to be. Zoe can have any little amusement she wishes in sentimental leave-takings if she like. It does but make my triumph more complete, and release me from any objection to play the passionate lover, which is not my rôle, you see."

Eustace returned the sarcasm with a more serious look of contempt.

"I am not Miss Danvers's guardian; she is able to judge of her own tastes," he replied, haughtily; "and I scarcely can believe you are so lost to honour as to deceive her when once she is your wife. You will surely try to make her happy? you will not bring her into hopeless, loveless misery?"

"Not if no one interferes to stir up the strife," returned Evan, significantly. "But charity begins at home, my good fellow, and I would advise you to look to yourself just now. Are you aware that the darkest suspicions are resting on you at this moment, and that, if necessary, circumstantial evidence will easily be collected to prove you are, or at the very least may be, guilty of Basil Pomeroy's blood?"

Eustace literally bounded from the spot, as if the electric fluid of a battery had thrilled him.

"Aburd—monstrous!" he exclaimed. "Why, I was lying in my sick-room at the castle at the time of his disappearance. You must have been imposed upon, Mr. Leslie," he went on, with a faint laugh.

"By no means. I have heard quite enough to show me that the case may be made a very strange one," returned Evan, coolly. "However, it is not for me to play judge or jury. I am far more inclined to give you this warning that may save a disagreeable and annoying investigation."

Eustace could scarcely doubt the serious meaning of the words.

"Leslie, for Heaven's sake throw over all this badinage and sneering, and tell me if it is in the bounds of probability that such a foul suspicion should rest upon me," he said.

"My dear fellow, I did not mean to have meddled in the matter, only that I have every reason to believe that some one else had forestalled me," he replied, calmly. "And, as to the impossibility of the affair, you must remember it is by no means an unprecedented charge. Lord Seaford was arrested and tried for the murder of General Pomeroy's brother and languished for life under the ingenious torture invented by Scotch law as 'Not Proven.' Why should not you, who scarcely can claim the same privilege of rank, be exempt?"

"Because I am innocent," exclaimed Eustace.

"It would be hard lines to assume that the unlucky nobleman was guilty, since it could not be proven," observed Evan, coolly. "Take my advice before too late—fly the country at once, and the doubtfulness of the evidence will be a strong reason not to make superhuman exertions for discovering your retreat."

"But I may have strong reasons for not following the advice," said Eustace, haughtily. "I, at any rate, will not brand my name by flight, and I may very probably find some cause to suspect the motives and the honour of a man who can counsel it. I shall not relieve you of my presence till a fitting time arrives, Mr. Leslie, and if my very life is a sacrifice, I will not desert the weak and the helpless."

And, resolutely turning away, the young man strode rapidly in an opposite direction from that taken by Zoe.

Evan gazed bitterly after him, his whole expression changing as he watched him disappear.

"Idiot! idiot!" he murmured. "As if you would rush on your fate. I have done my very utmost to save you. I have crushed back every feeling under the cold ice of outward indifference and scorn. But you have chosen, you have dared your fate, and your friends, and you must bide the event. I have not planned and waited for nothing. I will conquer though I hate all the fuss and the vulgar world of degrading contest and public scandal. Still the result shall be equally as certain a triumph as that of the most blustering and noisy of fools or knaves."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"Stop, my fine cove, there is no admission this way," said a harsh voice as Eustace half-mechanically forced his way through the thicket which formed a kind of continuation of Rosemount Wood.

The young man was in no very patient or placable mood.

And this sudden check on his progress somewhat excited his ire in an unreasonable degree.

"Stand off!" he exclaimed. "What do you mean, fellow? You have no right to stop me where the ground belongs to those with whom I am acquainted. I can pass at my pleasure."

"Oh, we do not talk much about rights here. This is the best argument," said the young fellow, appearing full in view, and exhibiting a slight but well-made figure, and the yet more convincing argument of a revolver that he brandished with a threatening air.

"More likely that I shall exercise the right of dispossessing you of that weapon, unless you can



[A CHASTE SALUTE.]

prove your claim to possess one," said Eustace, firmly. "There is far too much poaching already on these properties, without adding to the crime by murder."

"Pardon, my young sir, I am not going to shoot you," replied the youth, coolly. "But a slight whistle from me would bring enough to my help to make any resistance useless. And unless you promise to place yourself under my guidance, to conduct you out of the place by the way that will be most effectual for secrecy, you will, perforce, have to go to a place which is very different to your intentions."

Eustace guessed the truth at once.

He was in one of the more secret haunts of the gipsy camp, where their more private, and it might be more guilty arrangements and plans were carried on in safety and silence.

He had met with them too often in Germany, he had heard too much of the wild nature of the Zingari, not to be aware his position was by no means free from danger.

He seemed to be a regular Pariah, met at every turn by frowns and threats, while yet unable to prove his innocence.

"My good fellow, this is all very ridiculous," he said, with an affectation of cool indifference. "Where is your chief? I demand to be taken before him. Indeed, I shall decline to hold any parley with any one else," he went on, fancying that the young fellow looked rather impressed by his tone.

"We have none," he said, sullenly.

"You have no head?" returned Eustace, with a sneer. "That is scarcely to be believed, my good fellow. I know enough of your habits for that."

"It is true, in one way. We have but a woman over us, and she's nobody," said the youth; "but we shall be better off some day, if the stars come true. And since you're so anxious to see some one besides myself, I'll take you where you'll hear more than you may like perhaps as to your plans."

Eustace began to repent his rashness when too late.

Impatience of insolence had mingled with an indistinct craving to gain some tidings of the lost Basil, and, although this assuredly was no auspicious beginning, he was yet so far compromised that resistance would have been fairly hopeless.

"Be quick, then," he said, abruptly. "I have no time to spare if I am to reach my home to-night."

"Home. Oh, yes, I suppose you fine folks do call any house you happen to be at for your hot, close visits home," sneered the youth. "But we can give you a place to lie down in much more airy and

pleasant. So you needn't be afraid of being benighted."

And with a sneering laugh, Ben, for such in truth was the gipsy lad who had accosted Eustace, prepared to conduct him to the presence of his presumed chief.

It was not a long distance that they traversed, but it would have been well-nigh impossible for the young man to have found his way a second time among its windings and sharp turns.

At last, however, they came into a more open space, where was a rude and not even ordinary-sized tent was half-hidden under the shade of the neighbouring trees, and, pausing a moment, Ben hastily bade his charge wait outside while he entered the woodland dwelling.

"But it's no use thinking of running away," he said, threateningly. "You'd be caught in five minutes, I promise you, and be the worse for the attempt."

And with a rapid gesture of warning he vanished within the tent.

His absence was certainly not long enough to inspire either impatience or hope of escape.

And in a few minutes Eustace found himself, for the first time in his life, within a gipsy tent and face to face with a man whom he afterwards knew as Jacob, the second in command to the gipsy queen, and the lover of the beautiful Esther.

Jacob regarded him with a dark and suspicious frown, that somewhat softened as his eyes rested on the pale and worn features of the but lately invalid.

"You'd better sit down. The chair's not very soft but it's the same rest for the limbs," he said, pointing to a wooden seat made of the trunk of a fallen tree, sawn and hewed into some sort of shape.

Eustace obeyed the signal.

Indeed, he had been so long without rest or refreshment that even this doubtful repose was really grateful to his exhausted frame.

"I am told you asked for me—that you seemed to be trying to find your way to our private haunts and refused to give an account of yourself," he said. "What is it you want of me?"

Eustace guessed that it would avail him better to put a bold front on his proceedings rather than attempt to cloak them under real or veiled excuses.

"I came to learn the truth," he said, "and to tell it, if needful. Are you prepared to meet such intentions on my part?"

"That depends what it's about. We don't blab the truth to every one, even if we are too scrupulous for falsehoods," returned Jacob, gruffly.

"I suspect you scarcely need to be told," was Eustace's response. "The disappearance and the supposed murder of Mr. Basil Pomeroy is too fresh in your memory, I should imagine, for you to be surprised at any inquisition on that subject."

Jacob laughed scornfully.

"I may not be surprised at questions from some persons. I certainly should from you, Mr. Neville, unless as a blind," he returned, significantly.

An hour or two before and Eustace would have laughed the suggestion to scorn, even if he had comprehended its meaning. Evan Leslie's hints had somewhat enlightened his mind as to the wild suspicions that were cast upon him. But still he was too incredulous as to their possibility to meet them with any gravity or alarm.

"I will not affect to misunderstand you," he said, calmly, "but you know as well as myself that I was—that I am—as innocent as Basil's father himself of his death, and if you have the power to restore him to his family—if you can even give any information as to his fate, if he is really—"

He stopped, for there was something in the gipsy's face that warned him of his danger.

"Hark ye, my fine gentleman," said Jacob, sternly. "We may as well stop all this nonsense at once. Basil Pomeroy may be living or dead; I neither know nor care. In either case, it will depend on others whether the truth is ever known about him. But, at anyrate, it will not be ever found out by you, except you can first prove your own innocence. Did you not ever hear that General Pomeroy's brother was murdered in the very wood where they pretend that his son's blood was found? Did you never think it possible that Basil's fate would be supposed to be a species of revenge from those who were charged, either justly or unjustly, with the murder of his uncle?"

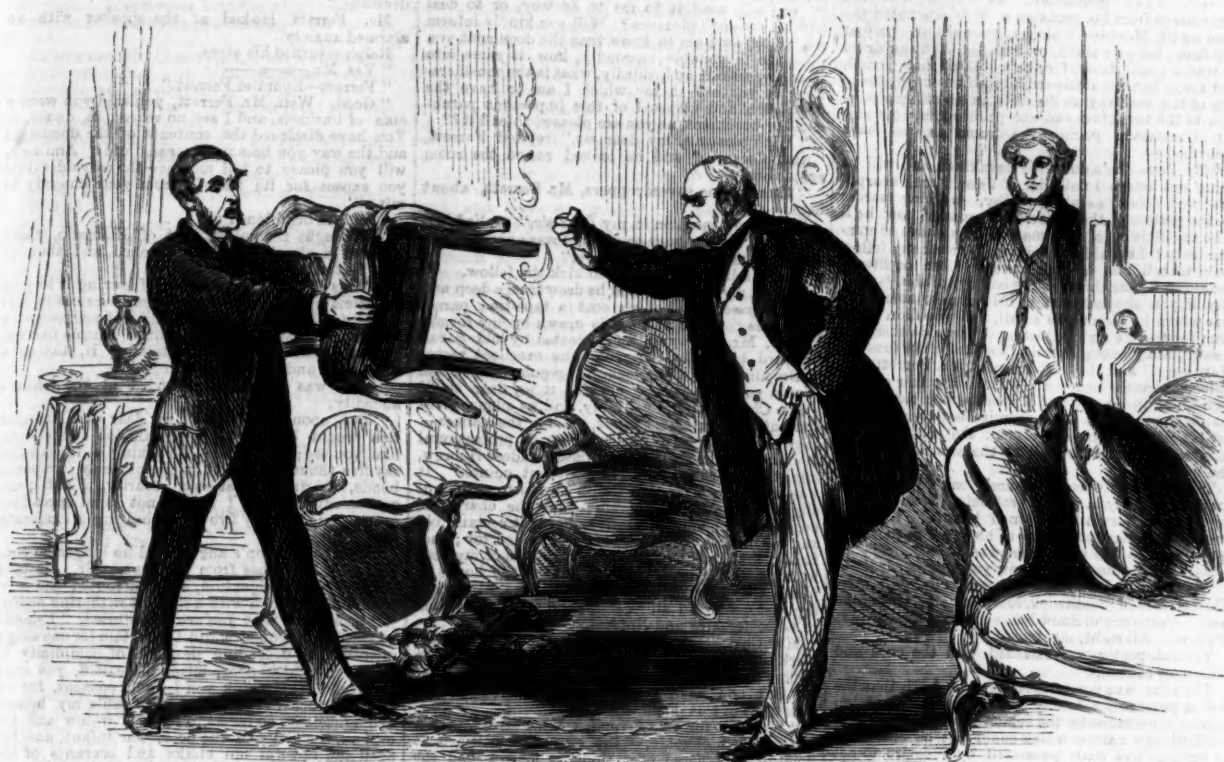
Eustace looked fairly bewildered.

"You talk in riddles," he said. "If it were as you say, what have I to do with the matter? I neither know nor am known of any one who, nearly twenty years ago, committed the foul deed. It is idle mockery to talk thus."

Jacob looked fixedly in the young man's face, his keen, dark eyes literally piercing into Eustace Neville's unflinching features.

"There are many things you do not know, and many persons know you whom you little suspect. Suppose, for example, that your father, whose whole life is such a mystery—suppose he were the murderer of General Pomeroy's brother and Melanie's father?"

(To be continued.)



[FERRETT'S COURAGE FORSAKES HIM.]

OLD RUFFORD'S MONEY; OR, WON WITHOUT MERIT, LOST WITHOUT DESERVING.

BY THE AUTHOR OF
"Fighting for Freedom," etc., etc.

CHAPTER V.

An' twere not as good a deed as drink
to break the pate of thee I am a very
villain. *Shakespeare.*

THE hour is eleven, and the apartment in which we now find the head of the Chesterton family at breakfast is indeed in marked contrast with that of his erstwhile residence in Gower Street, while the appliances and surroundings, and even that gentleman himself, have undergone an equally remarkable change.

Gilded consoles, marble-tipped, with panelled sheets of plate-glass reaching to the lofty ceilings, occupy the two panels on each side of the old-moulded door-frame, and a similar richly veined slab, bearing an immense Louis Quinze clock, with numerous figures of gilded bronze, and a dial almost illegible from overloading of fantastic ornamentation, stood in the pier between the two large windows of the apartment.

On the third side a massive sculptured chimney-piece, bearing *recherché* Dresden vases, was surmounted by a large canvas in a deep gold frame. This painting, intensely clever in its mechanical manipulation, had brought great kudos and a large accession of commissions to the lucky R.A., Mr. Vandyke M'Guilp, who, in the previous month of May, had exhibited it in Trafalgar Square (for the Academy had not yet migrated to Burlington House) as the "portrait of a gentleman."

Soon after, however, it was labelled as "portrait of Ralph Chesterton, Esq., F.R.S., F.S.A., F.G.S.," etc., etc., and Mr. M'Guilp was so overwhelmed with orders that a paragraph (paid for) in the "Fine Arts Review" informed the public that "we" (the editor, we suppose) "regret to learn that the completion of the great historical picture of Suetonius Paulinus at Battle Bridge (now King's Cross), containing representations of the scythe-wheeled chariots and 1,000 figures of ancient British and Roman warriors, with portraits of Queen Boadicea and her two daughters, is indefinitely postponed. This is owing to its gifted painter, Mr. M'Guilp, R.A., being so pressed by engagements for 'sittings' that he is compelled to relinquish the pursuit of future fame for the less brilliant but more lucrative branch of his profession, that of portrait. We and the public must regret

that the country should lose artistic rank by this perversion of genius that should be consecrated to historic works of cosmopolitan fame to the more profitable pursuit of portraiture."

No other painting adorned the apartment; the decorator and upholsterer had covered the rest of the wall-space. On a large table lay several formidable-looking packets, some bearing quite a row of queen's-heads, and many underlined "private." Most of these were begging-letters of every grade; some from the professional impostor; some from the really deserving; many from another and numerous class of clerical mendicants, soliciting contributions for schools, missions, hospitals, or "a small sum in aid of the restoration of the ancient parish church of St. Anthony-cum-porcus, a most interesting ecclesiastical relic, fast falling to decay." "The parishioners of Fleecy-em-cum-Tithe-om being very poor, funds are required," etc. There were also a score of printed circulars of all sorts and sizes, testimonials of cures by quack medicines, lists of cheap sherries and mountain ports, pianos and furniture on a new hire system, and everything a rich man should especially eschew.

All this and more Ralph Chesterton looked on languidly, and tossing them over in a heap left them to be opened, sorted and delt with by his secretary, or by his son Reginald, on whom had devolved this duty.

On a smaller round table of marquetry stood a small silver salver, with a richly chased *café-tière*, a corresponding cream-ewer, a small flagree sugar basin and one large china cup. A massive basket contained a few rusks and cracknels, and a gentleman's gentleman in a striped linen morning-jacket awaited the commands of the master of all this splendour as to what he would fancy for his morning meal. Ralph express his contented indifference, and Fitzplush retired. What a contrast was all this with the breakfast of Gower Street?

There, in the plain front parlour stood a stout circular table covered with a snow-white damask cloth displaying a service of large white china cups and saucers, with basin and milk-jug, all with rose borders; in the centre was a plate with the eight o'clock buttered rolls and an electro eggstand, while on the "wing" of the grate stood the bright copper kettle whence, on the coming down of papa, Cecilia poured the boiling water into the "Loyel," and thence into the cups of her father and Reginald.

But now Miss Cecilia did not come down to breakfast. She took it in her dressing-room adjoining her boudoir; while "Mr. Reginald" had his *café-au-lait* or chocolate brought by his valet to his bath-room.

Thus Ralph Chesterton, much to his discomfort, sat this morning in the "reception parlour" after taking a short "constitutional" in the enclosure of the square, contenting himself with the rusks and a biscuit, for he was feverish from a late party, which had kept him from his bed until nearly three a.m., as chaperon to Cecilia, while Reginald had been engaged at a *soirée dansante* given at the French ambassador's, and had consequently been unable to escort his well-loved sister.

Ralph Chesterton sat alone; and we cannot conscientiously say that the worthy and speculative philosopher found the most agreeable and cheering companionship in a sort of confidential communing with his own thoughts, which took something of the following colour and form:

"I'm somewhat weary of this responsibility of wealth. There's a great care and anxiety in duly expending a large fortune; that is, if its possessor has a conscience and a clear sense of duty to himself and to his fellow-creatures. How strangely inconsistent and childish is the vulgar idea of the illimitable enjoyments which wealth can purchase! Will it ensure health, or buy a good digestion, or give beauty to woman—egad! I believe it does sometimes come near to that—or courage or virtue to man? Can it make a father's children loving or obedient, or the comfort of his declining years? My observation of the world and society points rather to the contrary.

"I do not think I am adapted for a career of ambition. I do not love to command bought service; I could buy when I was less rich all the books I cared to read or to study. I fear, too, that the spur and incentive to exertion which my son had when the prizes of his profession were worth striving for as mere money prizes have been lost now that the emoluments attending them are no longer needed. Yet I should not like to forego the power which my wealth gives me of placing a coronet on the brow of my charming Cecilia."

"Pshaw! why Ralph Chesterton, your manly judgment is becoming effeminate—emasculated by the enervating influence of overmuch gold. What if the coronet bestowed upon my child brought not home happiness and the man of her heart's choice, and by-the-bye that's most likely. Would not a worthy husband of moderate competence, and to which I might add, be more likely to ensure her happiness?"

Ralph swallowed a cup of coffee abstractedly, caught up a rusk, rose, and began pacing the apartment.

He little suspected how his movements had been watched for nearly two hours by the lynx-eyed Mr.

Ferrett. That "gentleman," by statute, had seen him emerge from his mansion at 9.30 (he noted the time by St. Margaret's clock), observed his entry at 10h.35m., for he walked, or lounged, and sat down to read a small book, for the whole of that period, and then, having stationed himself on the opposite side of the roadway at the rails, in an oblique position to the breakfast and reception-room, now saw Mr. Chesterton pacing the room as we have described.

"By Jove, he's done his breakfast, and will be going out before I nail him if I don't look sharp," observed that astute worthy, walking across to the portico of the house. "I wonder how he'll take the little bit of information I shall have to communicate? I should think it would knock any fellow over to tell him he was spending ten or fifteen thousand a year that did not belong to him, 'specially if you showed him it belonged to somebody else whom he didn't like at all, and who didn't like him, for there's no love lost on either side there, as I saw plainly enough at old Ben Rufford's funeral. Here goes," and the next moment Mr. Ferrett had twice struck the heavy lion's head knocker on the iron knob, in the style of a most imperative postman's summons, as a compromise between the rattle-tat of a visitor's footman, the single knock of a tradesman or the pull at the servants' bell of the butcher-boy.

The door was opened leisurely and Mr. Ferrett stepped jauntily in with a professional smirk.

"Mr. Chesterton is within, I believe. Will you present this card and note to him and request an interview? I will wait an answer."

"Does Mr. Chesterton know your name, sir?"

"Why, ahem! know my name? Oh, yes. Mr. Ferrett, late of Smethwick, solicitor. He knows me well. Pearson and Snowdon, solicitors to late Mr. Rufford. All right, my friend."

The hall-porter was satisfied, and the card and note were sent in.

The note was mysterious. It set forth that the writer possessed a family secret which was of immense importance to the relatives of the late Mr. Rufford, of a nature which could not be entrusted to writing, and that, possessed by a desire to act honestly, but at the same time—as he was a poor man—to benefit himself by the information of which he had fortunately become possessed, the writer had, in the first instance, sought an interview with Mr. Ralph Chesterton.

"Very mysterious. 'Important family secret, ahem!'" soliloquized Mr. Chesterton, somewhat amused, and holding the letter between his finger and thumb. "I know him well, he says, but I say I don't know him at all. Ferrett—Ferrett—a good lawyer's name. Horace Smith rhymes it in the 'Rejected Addresses':

"Who blows on pounce
Must the Swarga renounce,
His ear by the flea in't been bitten
As he saw by the lawyer's clerk written,
Merit of merit,
Red wax and green ferrett,
Sealed, signed and delivered, being first duly stamped

"Clever parody on Southey that. But, by-the-by, my excellent acquaintance, Mr. Ferrett, is waiting to tell me a family secret. I may as well see him at once, as proverbially secrets are hard things to keep."

He sounded a little hand-bell.

"Tell Mr. Ferrett to step in."

With a deferential bow, but a smile of self-satisfied impudence, as Ralph read it, Mr. Ferrett approached the writing-table. Ralph motioned him courteously to a seat, and awaited his communication. Mr. Ferrett, despite his constitutional coolness and audacity, felt a trifle disconcerted.

"I have waited on you Mr. Chesterton—yes, sir, I have waited on you on a most important matter—a matter, sir, involving no less a question than the validity of the will of your uncle, the late Mr. Benjamin Rufford, under which you take his town mansion and message, together with—"

"Really, sir, this is impertinent—I mean it is a legal as well as a general sense. I am well aware of the provisions of my uncle's will."

"Ten thousand pardons, excellent sir. I am aware of that also, but I beg you will allow me, sir, to proceed regularly. Mr. Rufford's latest will sir—yes, his last will and testament, I say—is in the possession, my dear sir, of the humble individual who now addresses you. Under that will, my dear sir, you are bequeathed simply a sum in money, and it rests with me either to produce that will and at once deprive you of all your possessions, or, for an adequate consideration, to place this precious document in your hands, when, by its destruction, you may secure for ever—"

"Am I to understand," interjected Chesterton, almost choking with suppressed indignation, which Mr. Ferrett very naturally interpreted into emotion at his sudden and terrible disclosure. "Am I to understand that you possess the real last will of

my uncle, and that, for a consideration, as you call it, you will hand it to me to destroy, or to deal with at my good pleasure? Will you kindly inform me, first, how I am to know that the document you offer me is genuine; secondly, how it came into your possession; and, thirdly, what is the consideration, as you call it, for which I am to have the possession and disposal of this important parchment or document, as you are pleased to call it?"

"With pleasure, my dear sir," replied Ferrett, "with pleasure," and he looked round the room suspiciously.

"There are no eavesdroppers, Mr. Ferrett, about here."

"Oh, don't mention it, my dear sir," replied Mr. Ferrett, "it is for your own sake I was apprehensive lest our secret should transpire."

Ralph felt much inclined to kick the fellow.

"Here, my dear sir," and he drew from a deep and large breast-pocket of his coat a tape-tied parchment, "is the true will. It is drawn by my former master, Mr. Snowdon, and attested by old Sarah Ledyard, his housekeeper, and the excellent rector of Broadmoor, Mr. Sherlock. All regular, as you see. Would you like to hear me read it, my dear sir?"

Mr. Chesterton did not reply, and, as silence gives consent, off went Mr. Ferrett, reading the clauses—they were not many nor long—in a professional monotone, and a style which, like the oldest Hebrew, might be described as being "without points." It was, however, clear that Ralph Chesterton was but slightly mentioned therein; that the charitable bequests were multiplied afresh; that certain old and faithful servants were fully provided for; and, finally, that Bushy Frankland, "the son of my best loved sister, Susan," was to inherit the house in which they now stood, with the residue, after paying just debts and all legacies, and also the estates in Leicestershire and Notts.

Mr. Chesterton did not interrupt the usually clerk in his reading, and when, at its close, Ferrett looked up at him, he calmly said:

"But you have not told me how you became possessed of this document."

"Well, as for that," replied Mr. Ferrett, with a self-satisfied chuckle, "the two old gentlemen at Smethwick trusted everything to me. I had the master-key of the strong-room, in case of fire, when both were away, so I soon had a duplicate made. In one month, my dear sir, I know twice as much as the ancient fogies themselves of what their strong-room contained. Among the dead-ghosts were the titles and muniments of Mr. Rufford's property, with lots of things relating to loans and mortgages, which it would surprise and annoy a good many people who hold their heads high in the world if they were made public or told of them. I've made notes of lots of these, but that's my business, as they will some of them find out one day, if they don't come down liberally."

"As to your case, my dear sir, I think you will see I am acting as a real and confidential friend. You see there was but a very venial miscarriage, if any, on my part in this affair. Mr. Rufford, a few days before his death, sent over for Mr. Snowdon to come to Broadmoor on that or the next day, and bring with him this will. Now, Snowdon was away, and I, of course, opened the letter as business, I left it out for him to see when he came back, which he did not. So I got out the will and took a post-chaise. I found old Mr. Rufford very shaky, indeed, almost unintelligible, and so fretful and peevish, I may say insulting, because a clerk only had come over that he would not give any instructions at all for the codicil. In fact, he would do nothing without his 'old lawyer-friend,' as he called him."

"Well, I saw he could not last long—I did not think more than a day or so. I went back, and as I was returning I stepped into the billiard-room at the 'Wheatsheaf,' and somehow left my bag there by mistake. Next morning old Snowdon, who was also unwell, nonplussed me by asking me for the will, so I told him a cracker. I said I had left it at Broadmoor, and that old Mr. Rufford would very likely cancel it; at least, that was my impression, but that I was to go over there again on the following Monday for his final instructions. I had a reason for not going to the 'Wheatsheaf' till I got some cash on the Saturday, when on that very day came a letter by first post notifying your uncle's death. You may depend I had this parchment from the 'Wheatsheaf' in half an hour after that."

"Thus, you see, my dear sir, I became the sport of circumstances in this most important matter, and I think you will agree that it was indeed a fortunate circumstance for you that this document fell into such discreet hands as mine, and one who is so anxious to save you from the consequences of a disclosure of an old gentleman's whimsies. However, letting that pass—"

Ralph Chesterton interrupted the flow of his loquacity.

"Very good, so far," said he, "but, Mr. Ferrett, my time is valuable and my patience not of a very

tough fibre—apt to snap, I would have you to understand."

Mr. Ferrett looked at the speaker with an alarmed anxiety.

Ralph returned his stare.

"Yes, Mr. — a —"

"Ferrett—Ephraim Ferrett."

"Good. Well, Mr. Ferrett, you said you were a man of business, and I see no reason to doubt it. You have disclosed the contents of the document and the way you became possessed of it. And now, will you please to tell me the—consideration you expect for its transfer from your custody to mine?"

Ephraim brightened up.

He thought the golden part of Eldorado, which hovered in the distance, approached, and that he was fast nearing it.

"I was thinking, my dear sir, of leaving it to you to estimate the fitting reward of my services in this delicate matter. I at first thought of suggesting a small percentage on the amount of income derived by you under the will, capitalizing it, taking a round sum and have done with it."

Ralph was certainly astounded at the fellow's audacity.

"But, upon consideration, my dear sir, I thought this would be too inquisitorial, too income-tax like, you see; so I decided on asking a lump sum, say five thousand, which, upon properly prepared bonds, bearing a post-obit security, if not quite convenient at once, I should not mind spreading over a period of say five years, bearing a moderate rate of interest."

Ralph Chesterton's anger could no longer be controlled. He arose from his easy-chair, his eyes flashing with indignation, and confronted the now trembling Ephraim with a look of withering scorn.

"Scoundrel that you are!" he cried, "I should be thrice the scoundrel did I entertain for one single moment the degrading proposal of complicity in villainy in which, poor, miserable scitiff, you seek to involve me. Think you I would consent, for all that my uncle ever possessed, to defile my honour and conscience so far as to rob the widow and the orphan, the sick and the poor, the infant, and the aged and faithful old clerks and servants of the comfort, care, sustenance and recompense which my uncle—God bless him! if only for that—bequeathed to them with his dying hand? What have I ever done that should make such a wretch as you suppose that I would rob my kinsman, unfriendly though he be, of that to which he is fairly entitled? And as for you—miserable, dishonest, scheming knave as you are, on your own showing—begone! Do not pollute the air of the room I breathe in by your detestable presence another instant. I will write this very night to my Cousin Frankland, and leave him to deal with you and your stolen parchment. Begone, I say, or I will not answer for myself that I do not accelerate your departure by a kicking."

Ralph had so decided a forward movement at these words that the terrified Mr. Ferrett backed precipitately as he advanced, overthrowing some valuable articles of bric-a-brac and veru which came down with a crash upon the carpet. Seizing a massive dining-room chair by the back, he, by an effort, raised it before him, so as to present the four legs horizontally as a defence against assault, crying "Murder!" in a tone that bespoke the intensity of his terror.

His cry caused Mr. Chesterton's gentleman to open the room door with, "Did you call, sir?"

The situation was so ludicrous that Ralph Chesterton, falling into an arm-chair, laughed outright. And truly, to a man of his temperament it was serio-comic, with the latter element strongly predominating. Ralph Chesterton was a bony, spare, temperate man, of great muscular strength and activity, and about the height and weight which Captain Barclay, of Ury, the renowned trainer of Tom Cribb, declared "big enough and heavy enough to fight or wrestle any two-legged creature," viz., 5 ft. 10 inches, and 12 stone 8 lbs. But Mr. Fitzplush, who now made his sudden appearance (he had been listening outside for ten minutes or a quarter of an hour), by no means decreased Mr. Ferrett's idea of the physical odds against him. That gentleman stood six feet in his stockings, was fourteen stone in weight, with legs of the balustrade pattern, and a biceps that he was in the habit of baring in the servants' hall, and measuring with the girl's apron-strings, and again on a foot-rule, when its circumference was indicated at 22 inches.

At the apparition of this son of Anak Mr. Ferrett's last grain of even defensive courage forsook him. He fell upon his knees, still presenting his extemporized chevau-de-frise of four chair-legs in the direction of his new and more dreaded assailant.

"Did you call, sir?" repeated Mr. Fitzplush, with a grin at Ephraim. "I heard a cry, sir; so thought it my duty to enter without knocking."

Ralph Chesterton could scarcely compose his features as he, too, looked at the pitiable figure of Ephraim.

"I did not call, Fitzplush; but I am glad you have come. Just remove that impudent rascal."

Ephraim felt his courage returning. He rose to his feet.

"Excuse me, Mr. Chesterton, I am a member of the legal profession, and if any personal violence is offered to me I shall seek—"

"I will answer all that. Fitzplush, just put that scoundrel outside my door."

Fitzplush coolly advanced to Ephraim and, taking him by the collar with a giant's grip, shoved him towards the door of the apartment.

"Master says I'm to see you out, my fine fellow, so I'll do it."

Here he gave poor Ephraim's necktie such a twist that he cried out and struggled with pain.

"Oh, you're a-resisting, are you?" said Fitzplush, applying his knee to the small of Ephraim's back. "It's no go—hout you are, and no mistake."

And the next moment, the surprised but laughing hall-porter having opened both leaves of the hall-door with unusual celerity, Mr. Ferrett was seen taking a flying leap from the top step, clearing the three others which led up the door and more than half the broad flagged pavement of the right-hand side of Eaton Square ere his boot soles touched terra firma, the motive power of this unworldly agility being a fling and a hoist by the arms and knee of Mr. Fitzplush, whose prowess in the swings and Catherine-wheelers had often been exhibited at White Conduit, Hornsey Wood House, and elsewhere, when the men of Cornwall and Devon meet for Easter or Shrovetide amusements.

Scarcely had Mr. Fitzplush returned to his master's room for further orders than Ralph had thought himself that he had left Ephraim and his "important document" slip away without a clue whereby to trace him, should that be desirable.

"Fitzplush," he said, "hasten after that fellow. Put a policeman on his track and let me know where he goes to. I may want him again. Lose no time."

"Certainly, sir," replied Fitzplush.

In ten seconds he had seized his hat and, by giant strides, had caught sight of Ephraim, who, carefully rubbing his shiny hat with his coat-sleeve—it had been thrown after him by the hall-porter when Fitzplush quoted him out—was just turning the corner of the square, en route for the back alleys of Chelsea, where, in Turk's Row, or thereabouts, dwelt an old pal, a limb of the law, whose advice and assistance he resolved to seek to see if he could not obtain some recompense and solatium in money for the indignity and assault committed on his person by Fitzplush, at the order and responsibility of his master, Ralph Chesterton, Esq.

CHAPTER VI.

Man is his own star, and that soul that can
Be honest is the only perfect man. *Fletcher.*

THAT night Reginald Chesterton declined three "at-homes" of match-making Belgianian mammae, and Cecilia did not attend the musical soiree of her "dear friend," the Honourable Miss Finesse, whose brother, the Honourable Henrice Temple Metternich Finesse, had incited her to get up this special party that he might judge, first, if report spoke truly of Cecilia Chesterton's musical gifts; and, secondly, whether, as she had the reputation of somewhere about a hundred thousand pounds, he could like her well enough to throw the handkerchief to her, and bestow on her his name and his future title.

This little arrangement, however, did not come off, for Ralph, on going out to his solicitor's, had left word that when his son came in he should be asked to stay at home during the evening, as his father particularly desired his company.

He himself had, in a dozen sentences, told Cecilia the purport of Mr. Ferrett's visit and the nature of his secret. Cecilia, who inherited her father's high sense of honour, felt no regret, except at the altered circumstances of her parent and her dear Reginald, and when Ralph read over to her the letter he proposed to send to his cousin she approved his conduct, and felt that he had another claim on her respect and admiration. It was as follows:

"No —, EATON SQUARE,
LONDON, May 18th, 18—.

"DEAR COUSIN FRANKLAND,—Although somewhat estranged by petty circumstances attending our social position, I cannot forget the tie of relationship which exists between us, though what I am about to communicate is simply in accordance with my conscientious conviction of my duty towards my fellow-man. In brief, then, I have to inform you that a fact has this very day come to my knowledge which involves no less a change in our position than your becoming (what you have of right always been) the legal heir to our Uncle Rufford's large estates, and the greater part of his accumulated wealth, while I retire, not unwillingly, from the false position to which an error has

elevated me, and which, but for the villany of a knavish underling of old Mr. Rufford's attorney, I should never have occupied.

"The matter, Cousin Frankland, stands thus: A scoundrel of the name of Ferrett, in the service of Oldfield and Snowdon, purloined the last will of our uncle, and allowed a much older one, made while you were yet a schoolboy, to take effect; withholding the latter and more complete document for the purpose of fraudulent extortion. The fellow has been with me this day, read over the parchment, and audaciously proposed a bribe of five thousand pounds to keep the secret, deliver up the instrument, and leave me in quiet possession of your property. To you I shall leave it to deal with the scoundrel as he deserves. I have set the police on his track, and await your instructions in the matter.

"For myself and family, we shall be ready at any time most convenient to you to hand over all property which is yours by right, and for myself, I shall seek a little of lettered ease and country retirement, content with the moderate amount of the world's goods which remains to me.

"Awaiting your reply, or arrival,

"Your affectionate cousin,

"RALPH CHESTERTON."

We must confess that this lofty self-denial was somewhat of a shock to one in that small family circle. Reginald Chesterton's countenance fell when Cecilia, as he thought abruptly, communicated to him their altered position—as she termed it; their "utter ruin," as he phrased it.

"Do you tell me, dearest Cecilia," asked he, anxiously, "that father has proposed no conditions, made no stipulations, and taken this self-confessed scoundrel's statements as true *au pied de la lettre*? Was not his aim barefaced extortion, and is his mere assertion of our ruin, and his version of the contents of this questionable will to be taken upon trust and without a searching scrutiny? I don't believe father even had the parchment in his hand for inspection! Was there ever such unworlly simplicity in dealing with a self-confessed felon?"

At this point in their colloquy Ralph Chesterton's knook was heard, and Reginald almost blushed with consciousness of his moral inferiority when his father entered the room with a calm and cheerful smile, and, kissing his daughter affectionately on the forehead, observed:

"Cecilia, my love, I have been to Lincoln's Inn and informed my solicitors of the step I have taken and the letter I had already posted to my cousin. It is strange how little professional men seem to appreciate self-denial. My lawyers are honest men, as the world goes, but will you believe it? they suggest that I had too hastily assumed the worst view of my own position, that I had admitted all against myself, without waiting to see what the other side (that is, the supposed heir) could prove. They suggested that the will might prove to be irregularly executed, and a score of quibbles and difficulties, till I got quite out of temper with them and myself. But I soon got over that when I appealed to that infallible inward monitor, my conscience, and asked it whether I had done unto others even as I would they should do unto me. Why, Reginald, you look perplexed and east down! What's the matter, man? I have enough left, and, as old Quarles saith, 'he that hath enough, even in his own conceit, is richer than the Macedonian madman—ay, or Croesus, King of Lydia, himself.' What say you, my pretty Cecilia? A pleasant country-house, abundant flowers, a piano, a harp, a guitar, some pretty pictures, books, a pet or two, one good female friend, a few select acquaintances, a pew in the village church, a pupil or two in the village choir, two visits to London in the year to rub off rusticity, see the shops, hear the best singers, see the best plays, and look in at the Royal Academy to compare the progress—or, for that matter, the occasional retrogression of art—a drive round the parks, a visit to the Crystal Palace and the places of popular amusements of the better class. Could you, with these and your father's society, support existence?"

Cecilia felt ashamed at even having listened for a moment to Reginald's censures of her father's conduct, forgetting that he knew nothing of what had passed.

She threw herself into his arms, with a gush of half-joyful, half-penitent tears, and an emotion that surprised him.

Reginald's conscience smote him with a momentary compunction, but it quickly passed away, and in reply to a remark of his father he said:

"I am sure, dear father, you never heard me murmur at your decision upon any point; but I cannot help thinking, and I say it with respectful deference, that your solicitors were perfectly right in suggesting doubts as to the prudence or propriety of admitting as truth the unsupported statements of a cheat, who may be an impostor, before they are absolutely proven. Who knows but what this admitted purloiner of parchments,

this gambler and swindler, profiting by his knowledge of the will and other deeds of old Mr. Rufford, has concocted this precious discovery? For myself, I should treat it as a forgery and this fellow as an impostor until it was fully and incontestably verified in a court of law, where its validity would be questioned and its genuineness determined upon. Why should we resign this house and our position in society, with all the agremens of wealth and rank to a fox-hunting squire, upon the ipse dixit of a fraudulent and baffled extortioner, who comes with a cock-and-ball story in one hand and his own damning confession of criminality in the other, to assert that the latest caprice of an imbecile old gentleman was different from an earlier one; and who proposes to put the seal to his villany by upholding the wrong person in wrongful possession of the property, for the small commission of five thousand pounds? Really this is too gross."

Reginald Chesterton did not interrupt his son, but looked at him with an expression of aggrieved surprise.

"You are deceiving yourself, Reginald," said he, in a sorrowful tone. "And you know it. Nay, do not make a gesture of dissent. What we wish we easily believe. This rascal's story is too true. I saw the will, seals, attestation and all, and I am sure he read it correctly. I knew two of the signatures, at least those of my uncle and of the lawyer, with whom I have lately been in correspondence. And, Reginald, I trust you know me too well to suppose that I would resort to a legal quibble to defeat right, or that I would lay my head on my pillow with the consciousness that I was profiting by fraud, falsehood or injustice."

Reginald Chesterton was silent. He was well aware of his father's inflexible maintenance of his argument when he felt that reason and truth were on his side, and succumbed, though only half-convinced of the expediency, at least, of his parent's conduct in this difficult matter.

Cecilia, with a good woman's instinct, came to the rescue of Reginald and prevented further discussion by declaring her opinion that her father's lawyers might be, and no doubt were, professionally right, but for her part she loved not law nor lawyers, nor their crooked ways.

"Father, dear father," exclaimed she, "from my earliest days, since I could discern right from wrong, you have been my guide, my friend, my instructor, my adviser, my example. Oh, how gladly shall I exchange this feverish whirl of fashionable dissipation, this hollow splendour, this varnished display, these venerated vanities, for the plain, solid, enduring friendships, the unclouding pleasures, the flowers, the song of birds, the hum of bees, the music of the meadow bell—a thousand rustic enjoyments! Nor will summer and sunshine close our happy hours. With winter will come the glow of the home fireside, surrounded by the faces we love best, and warmed by the affection of those we venerate and respect for their virtues and moral worth. Music, conversation, books, and, with me, useful domestic cares and sweet rest will shorten the hours of light and of darkness. Oh, my father, I shall then see more of you, have more of your company—and for this would I gladly exchange the weary show and sham of what is called the 'best society.'"

As the candid, open-hearted girl spoke thus her father looked at her mobile face with glowing admiration. He thought her at that moment a transfigured angel, and, seizing her by both hands, proved her to be loving and living flesh and blood by a warm paternal kiss, which Cecilia as lovingly returned.

Reginald felt he was out of this little scene, and, suddenly remembering that he had left a paper at his club—the *Alfred*—he hurried out with a remark that he hoped to be back in less than an hour.

Ralph looked after his son as he left the room, but made no further allusion to the subject of their recent conversation.

"Cecilia, my dear," said he, in a gentle tone, "what was that song I heard you singing as I passed the drawing-room? I mean an Italian song from some recent opera—I think 'Linda di Chamouni'—so brilliant that—"

"Ah, you should hear Angelina Bosio warble it, papa. But, *faut de meilleur*, I will try."

Cecilia seated herself at the piano and, after a few bars of prelude, dashed into Linda's finale:

Alfin brillar nell' Iride,
Io vedo il mio contento,
Gi' istanti dante lagrime
Per gioia mi trasmento?

with such sparkle and freshness and bird-like facility that her fond parent thought the gifts of Bosio, Sontag and Persiani combined might rival but could not excel her.

The pathetic farewell from "La Figlia del Reggimento," "Convien partir," followed, and with this and some charming English ballads Cecilia drove from the mind of her father and from her

own all the black cares which sit behind the worldling who lives only for wealth.

But we must turn from this pleasant picture of home affection to look after the proceedings of Mr. Ephraim Ferrett, whom we left en route for the slums of Belgravia, which adjoin old Pimlico and Eastern Chelsea.

(To be continued)

BURIED SECRETS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Hunted for Her Money," "Expectations," "Fighting with Fate," etc., etc.

CHAPTER III.

When once the young heart of a maiden is stolen The maiden herself will steal after it soon.

It was the morning of the day subsequent to that on which occurred the interview detailed in the preceding chapter—a dull, gray February morning, damp and chill, with a dun sky, and now and then scattering snow-flakes in the thick air.

Upon a lonely heath in Dorsetshire, her figure outlined with more or less distinctness against the gloomy sky a young girl was riding alone.

She was dressed in a dark-blue habit, a chimney-pot hat on her head, with long blue veil floating behind her, and white gauntlet gloves.

She was Miss Diana Paulet, of the Yews, a fine though gloomy old country seat a mile to the eastward.

She was usually accompanied in her daily rides by a gray-haired groom, but she had just dismissed him somewhat peremptorily, and he was returning homewards at a slow pace.

The most casual observer could have told at a glance that Miss Paulet was high-bred, well educated, and thoroughly refined.

She was no simple pretty country maid, but an exquisite little patrician beauty, with a proud pose of the small head set so daintily upon her slender neck—a beauty who would have commanded admiration in a court drawing-room.

She had a slim, straight figure, pliant as a young willow, and her every movement was full of grace. Her face was small, round, and delicate—a dainty, blossom-like face, full of spirit, sweetness, and a rare, exquisite loveliness. A pair of large, velvety gray eyes, dark, innocent and fearless, full of radiant splendours like two dusky stars, glorified her countenance.

Her small mouth, with vivid scarlet lips habitually upturned at the corners in a saucy smile, gave piquancy to her features. Her hair of chestnut brown was arranged after the fashion of the day, but the little waves and ripples only enhanced the beauty of the wide white forehead.

It was not a meek face, this we have described, but it was a pure, lovely, beautiful face, with possibilities of mutinous expression in the deep, splendid eyes, and possibilities of passion in the curves of the tender lips—the face of one endowed with a sensitive nature, a high intellect, a passionate soul, a true and warm heart.

And all these Diana Paulet possessed. She was the sunshine of the Yews, and the worshipped young mistress of a score of devoted servants.

Suddenly she wheeled her horse and halted, looking back at her departing groom, and then towards her home beyond.

The Yews, set in a grove of trees, uplifted its tall chimney stacks above them. The girl could even see the great bell-turret of the mansion from her point of observation.

"I suppose papa will be horrified when Denton returns without me," said Miss Paulet to herself. "but I must have at least one minute's freedom—especially this morning. Perhaps Denton will be ordered to return—I must take care that he does not find me very speedily."

She gave her thoroughbred a smart little tap with her whip, and he sped forward like an arrow shot from a bow.

Miss Paulet rode with the ease and grace of one bred to the saddle. She was borne over the gray and dreary heath at a pace that would have frightened most women, and did not relax her speed until a mile more of distance and a belt of shrubbery intervened between her and her home.

Then she slackened her pace, caressing her horse, while she sent a rapid, inquiring glance around her.

Her gaze abruptly settled upon the figure of a horseman who was approaching her swiftly from the opposite direction.

A quick blush dyed the girl's face. It had vanished, however, before the horseman had gained her side, and she met him with a coquettish smile, in which was something of shyness.

He was young and prepossessing in appearance, with the airs and graces of a man of the world. His name was Philip Ryve. He was Diana Paulet's lover.

Miss Paulet knew very little of Philip Ryve's history—only so much as he himself had told her. She was fresh from boarding-school, where she had spent most of her life—an aristocratic school in which she had been kept in a seclusion like that of a convent. Since her return to the Yews her life had been little less secluded. Her father lived the life of an ascetic, seeing few visitors, and those few men of her own age.

She had no young friends, no companions, nor associates. Motherless, without brother or sister, with only a distant relative, an ancient maiden lady of acrid temper and impoverished condition, a dependent of Mr. Paulet and an inmate of his house, to serve as her chaperone and duenna, guide and friend, all in one, her life was lonely in the extreme. Her daily existence was made up of rides and walks—in which a groom nearly always attended her—rambles in the gardens, reading under the direction of Miss Edgely, some music and some fancy needlework, and a great deal of weariness.

She was an ardent, impulsive girl, with a quick imagination and romantic tendencies. In one of her long and solitary rambles, when she had escaped without an attendant, she had been accosted by a tramp who had demanded her money and watch. Miss Paulet, haughty and courageous, had declined to comply with this demand. The tramp, angered at her refusal, had then announced his determination to have not only her purse and jewels, but a kiss also.

It was at that juncture that Philip Ryve came around a curve in the road, saw the position of affairs at a glance, and sprang forward to the rescue.

In a moment more the tramp, in a battered and bruised condition, with imprecations on his lips, was limping away into the wood which bordered the highway; and Philip Ryve, as graceful as any knight of olden time, was proffering his services to the young lady as escort to her home.

To Miss Paulet's innocent eyes he seemed a very hero.

He was handsome, with black hair, long black side whiskers, jet-black eyes, and olive skin, a tall, well-made figure and stately carriage—a man to impress an imaginative girl as noble and heroic.

He accompanied her to the very gates of The Yews, and the look he gave her at parting haunted her the following night through.

After the first meeting they encountered each other very often.

Whenever Miss Paulet could rid herself of her attendant, upon her rides and walks, Philip Ryve was sure to join her.

He announced himself as an artist, of impoverished fortune, but of fine old family, and after a score of seemingly chance meetings, he began to talk of love.

It was then—when he had made to her a distinct proposal of marriage—that Miss Paulet referred him to her father.

To her surprise, he declined to see Mr. Paulet. He was poor, he said, but he was proud. He could not brook refusal. He could not go to Mr. Paulet of The Yews and ask him for his daughter's hand, being convinced that a contemptuous refusal would be accorded him. No, their meetings must be secret. Their love must not be revealed to any one, least of all to Mr. Paulet.

The declaration of Philip Ryve's love for her had occurred in The Yews park upon the very afternoon upon which Mr. Keene, the solicitor, appeared at Thorncombe Manor, with the tidings of the existence of an heiress to the Thorncombe wealth.

Diana was truthful and straightforward to the very core of her being. She had never planned a meeting with her lover, although it must be owned that she had often hoped to meet him during her rambles, and that her hopes had been seldom disappointed. If Philip Ryve had not courage to go to her father with the story of their love, she must go.

And, accordingly, that very evening after her lover had declared himself to her—that same evening upon which Lord Thorncombe, Mr. Keene, and Piers Dalryell held council together at Thorncombe Manor in regard to the discovery of the heiress—Diana Paulet descended to the library of The Yews with a wildly throbbing heart, and found her father in the midst of its dimness and stillness, busy at his books.

Mr. Paulet was a grim, reserved, stern-visaged man, and his features did not soften as his gaze turned from his book to the lovely face of his daughter. There was no encouragement in his manner, nothing to invite her confidences, and it required a high degree of courage in the young girl to unfold her errand. Shrieking back into the

shadow, her face now pale, now scarlet, Diana told him of her first meeting with Philip Ryve.

When she paused he made no comment, save to issue a command that she should not go forth again unattended, and turned again to his book.

"But, papa," said the girl, presently, with a feeling of desperation, "listen to me. There is more to tell."

Mr. Paulet turned his cold glance again upon her face, exhibiting impatience at her continued presence. And, then, the girl told him that she had met Ryve often of late, and that only an hour or two before he had told her that he loved her, and had asked her to be his wife.

"What nonsense!" said Mr. Paulet, arching his brows and curling his lips cynically, his cold glance at her having in it both contempt and amusement. "You are but a child, Diana. This fellow is but an adventurer. I forbid your speaking to him again. You should have known better than to exchange words with him without having first a proper and formal introduction. What can Miss Edgely have been about to allow you so much freedom? Henceforth, when you go out of the house, let Miss Edgely or Denton always attend you. Let there be no more of this folly—mind!"

"But, papa—"

"Not another word! I will not see the young man, if he calls, and I forbid you to see him. I am surprised at your want of dignity and decorum, after the training you have received. You may go!"

And, with a wave of the hand, as if her affairs were of the smallest possible importance, Mr. Paulet dismissed her and returned to his studies.

A kindly word at that moment, an affectionate display of interest in her, advice given in fatherly tenderness, these would have saved Diana Paulet many an hour of remorse and anguish—but they were not given.

She lingered a moment, her young soul swelling with a passionate sense of injustice and wrong, and then went quietly up to her own rooms without another word.

Mr. Paulet gave no further thought to her communication. Diana had slept but little during the night, and had come forth early in the morning to ride, in the hope and expectation of seeing her lover. He had lodgings near the village of Leddiston, some five miles distant from The Yews, and it was in this direction the girl had come.

Greatly to her satisfaction, she encountered him, as we have described.

He raised his hat with easy grace as he neared her and reined in his horse at her side, his eyes scanning her face with strange eagerness.

"What news, Diana?" he asked, as soon as salutations had been exchanged. "Did you find courage to carry out your intention? Did you tell Mr. Paulet?"

"Yes," answered the girl, "I told him."

"And what did he say? Did he consent to see me—to look at my credentials—to hear all I have to say? Ah, I read your face, Diana. It is just as I expected—just as I feared."

"You should have told him yourself," said Diana, with some bitterness. "It was your place to go to him, Philip, with your credentials and your story, and ask his permission to visit me."

"But how could I have gone to him—I, who am a poor artist, and who work for my living?" cried Philip Ryve, reproachfully. "Mr. Paulet is wealthy, proud, cold, haughty, and reserved. He would have sneered at my audacity, and ordered a servant to thrust me out of his house. You are his only child. He has high hopes in regard to your future. He expects you to contract a brilliant marriage. With your beauty, your family, your wealth, he would expect you to marry a title, at the least. I could not win his consent to our marriage, Diana. It is impossible."

The girl's pure young face paled.

"What then?" she said. "We must part."

"Part! Will you give me up, Diana, for that old man's prejudices? Has he ever given you love, or tenderness, or sympathy? Did he not send you from him at your mother's death some ten years ago, and leave you all these years in a fashionable boarding school, scarcely allowing you to return home for the holidays? You are not necessary to him, Diana, and you are necessary to me! Diana, I cannot live without you. Shall I resign my young love's dream—shall I give up my whole life's happiness for your father's pride? I cannot! I cannot!"

He bent his florid face down close to her own. His pleading glances went to her heart. In all her life, since her mother's death, she had known nothing of devoted love and tenderness, and her yearning for them had been deep and constant. She tried to steel her heart now to her lover's insidious advances, to heed the dictates of duty, to think of her father's

commands, but Philip Ryve followed up his pleadings with others more earnest, more loving, more passionate—and she listened to him.

"Diana," he said, "Oh, my darling, you hold a man's life in those little white hands of yours. Diana, I cannot go to your father. You know that he would send me away in contumely. If I were to go to him with you, you know," and his voice grew persuasive, and his eyes softer and more tender, "with you as my wife, Diana, and he knew that we were safely and truly married, he would make the best of the matter and receive me as his son. When a thing is irrevocable one does not fight against it. And your father, Diana, would never consent to link your name with a scandal. One brave act upon your part, my darling, and our path is cleared of difficulties—our happiness is won!"

"And that act?"

"Is to marry me now," returned Philip Ryve, ardently. "To marry me out of hand! Oh, Diana, I love you with all my soul. I cannot, will not, live without you! Your father will forgive us, once we are safely married. Diana, I have dared to procure a marriage licence. I went over to the little village of Rosney Heath last night and engaged the clergyman to marry us this morning! You think me audacious? It is my love that makes me so bold. Rosney Heath is eleven miles from The Yews. No one knows you there. You were never there in your life, you told me. Come with me to the little church and the waiting clergyman, and become my wife."

The girl made no answer, but the colour came and went in her exquisite face, and her lids drooped over the splendid eyes.

"As soon as we are married," said the tempter, in his soft, low tones, "we will ride straight to The Yews. We will see your father and ask his forgiveness. Diana, he will look at us coldly, then bid us go about our business and leave him to his books. See how well I understand him, dearest. He will surely forgive us. He will accept me as his son-in-law. His pride, his dislike of scandal, everything will combine to keep us. Oh, Diana, you hold my destiny at your caprice. Will you marry me? Everything depends on your decision now. If you refuse my prayer, you send me away—to what fate Heaven knows. But we should never meet again. Decide, my darling! More than you know hangs on your decision!"

At more than Diana Paulet knew hung upon her decision! What would be her answer? Would she heed the dictates of duty, or would the specious pleadings of her lover prevail?

He waited in a breathless suspense for her decision.

CHAPTER IV.

We need not detail all the arguments and persuasions employed by Philip Ryve to gain the consent of Diana Paulet to their immediate marriage. The girl was young and as innocent of the world and its ways as a little child. Ryve was to her the impersonation of nobleness, heroism and every virtue. Her home was one in which affection had no place. Her father never caressed her, never looked at her with loving smiles, never cared for her presence. Her ancient duenna, Miss Edgely, was cold and measured in all her words and actions. The girl had all the yearning of a young and ardent nature for love, and until now it had been denied to her.

Philip Ryve was the first young man with whom she had become acquainted, and what wonder, under all the circumstances, that she had surrendered her heart to him?

His specious arguments blunted her perceptions of right and wrong. She tried to think, but her brain seemed in a whirl. Her heart beat violently. And still he pleaded and urged and still she listened as one in a dream.

The two figures, so unlike, mounted upon horses, and outlined against the gray horizon, remained for some time almost motionless, but the snowflakes came faster and a keener chill was in the air, and Philip Ryve, feeling the cold to his very bones, took her horse's rein and gently led the way at a walk towards Leddistan.

"A brisk canter and we are at Rosney Heath," he said. "Diana, darling, you will not fail me now?"

She raised her eyes and looked full into his handsome face. Her purpose to resist him was vanquished. She forgot her father, her home, her duty, in the bewilderment of this strange fascination, and her purple-gray eyes expressed a shy assent.

Philip Ryve sent a long, sweeping exultant glance backward over his shoulder in the direction of The Yews. The groom was nowhere visible. Then, urging the horses to a gallop, the young pair sped onward over the heath.

They passed through Leddistan and continued their ride beyond upon the road to Rosney Heath. They said little, only now and then Philip Ryve uttered some epithet of endearment that thrilled the girl's soul and set her pulses throbbing, and half an hour's brisk ride brought them to the hamlet which was their destination.

Rosney Heath consisted of a dozen houses, one or two shops and a smithy. At the farther end of the street, at some distance from even the nearest cottage, stood the church, with the vicarage close beside it.

The church was nearly two centuries old. Its walls were mantled with ivy. Its tower was crumbling into decay. Its yard was thronged with graves. To this church the villagers came on Sundays, with the farmers and farm-labourers of miles around. Certain counties families retained their high-walled pews in the quaint old place of worship, although it must be owned that they seldom choose to occupy them.

Philip Ryve dismounted at the gate and assisted the girl to alight. He secured the horses and the two walked slowly to the open church door, passing between two rows of graves.

Was it some foreboding of the trouble she was bringing on herself that chilled her heart? Did some vague warning of all the woe that was to spring from this hour's madness press upon her soul? She shrank back as if to beat a retreat, but Philip Ryve clasped her hand in a fervent clasp, and whispered: "Courage, Diana. Courage, my darling. A few minutes—a few words—and then we will go together to your father. He will not refuse to forgive his only child. Courage, Diana, and our happiness is secured for ever!"

He drew her gently forward and they passed into the church together.

The great vaulted room was dim and chill. They halted a moment to accustom their eyes to the gloom. The stained-glass window-panes, the memorial tablets on wall and floor, the bare benches with their tall, straight backs, the big square pews for the "gentry," with their close-drawn curtains, the chancel, the reading-desk, and the high pulpit which seemed perched in mid-air, all these Diana noted in turn, while her heart throbbed wildly, and her pulses beat with strange rapidity.

As her eyes became accustomed to the dimness she saw by the chancel-rail two or three figures—those of the clerk, the pew-opener, and an old woman. She had scarcely discovered these persons when Philip Ryve drew her gently forward, and they threaded the aisle and stood before the chancel.

The clerk, a superannuated old man, quite in keeping with the church, came forward to meet them.

"Are you the couple who desire to be married?" he asked, with a curious glance at the exquisite face of the girl.

"Yes," assented Philip Ryve, briefly. "Is the vicar come?"

"He is in the vestry," responded the clerk. "I will call him."

He hurried away noiselessly, returning presently with the vicar, an old and venerable man, with half-shut eyes, and a mild and dreamy countenance.

The vicar took his place. The ceremony began. A wild and sudden desire for flight came to the girl, but she believed it was too late for retreat.

In a sort of panic she listened to the address of the vicar, heard Philip Ryve's quiet responses to the questions demanded, and even forced herself to utter in a strange and frightened voice.

The ordeal was soon over. The marriage-ring was on her finger; she and Philip Ryve had been pronounced man and wife.

As in a dream, Diana went with her young husband to the vestry-room and signed the marriage register. Then Philip Ryve pressed a handsome marriage fee into the vicar's hand, and the young pair quitted the church.

In that single half-hour Diana Paulet had, in her girlish thoughtlessness and folly, sown the wind. She was thereafter to reap the whirlwind.

Ryve helped her to mount into her saddle, sprang into his own, and they proceeded at a walk down the village street.

"The world seems all changed since we went into the church, Philip," said the girl, with a stifled cry.

"It is all changed for us, Diana," answered her bridegroom, smiling. "We shall begin life all new from this hour, my wife. I can scarcely realize that you are mine—my own! Diana," and his voice took a tone of deeper tenderness, and a graver look overspread his face; "if your father will forgive us and accept me as his son-in-law I will do my best to deserve your trust and his."

"Philip, I know it."

"You have seen good in me from the very first,

have you not, little Di?" he asked, with a smile and a quiver of the lips. "Your trust and confidence inspire me to be all you think me. I have told you the truth in saying that I come of good family. Even your proud father need not scorn one of my name and blood. But I have been wild and foolish, Diana. I have done things for which I blush now. I—"

He set his lips together, and a look of fear darkened his eyes as some recollection intruded upon his mind. He did not speak again until they had gained the open country road that led across the heath to Leddistan. Then he slipped from his saddle and walked close beside the girl, leading his horse.

"Come, walk beside me, Diana, for a little way," he urged. "I have a great deal to say to you, and I must say it now before we see your father."

The girl slipped down into his waiting arms. He led the two horses, and they walked side by side. There was a little silence between them. Diana stole a glance into his face, and to her surprise saw that it wore a look of trouble and despair.

"What is it, Philip?" she whispered, putting her arm in his. "What is the matter? Tell me. Have I not a right to know?"

"Yes, Diana, you have a right to know—you shall know. I am nerving myself to tell you. I am not all you think me, little Di. I have been weak and wicked even. I am not worthy your pure love. I have done wrong in taking advantage of your isolation and inexperience, and thus urging on our marriage. But, Diana, I love you truly, unselfishly, madly. I would die before one hair of your little head should be harmed. You believe me, do you not, Diana?"

He looked at her eagerly, through tears.

"I believe you, Philip. But why do you talk so strangely?"

"You are pure as the falling flakes of snow," said Ryve; "but I—I have lived riotously; I have wasted my fortune and good name; and never until now, as I look into your pure, true eyes, have I realized how greatly I have fallen. Let me tell you all, dear, and then despise me if you must. I should have told you all this before our marriage, but better now than later. I was left an orphan in my childhood. I had one brother, who was two years older than myself, and as like to me as if we had been twins. Even our nearest friends could scarcely tell the one of us from the other. This brother became my guide and exemplar. He was wild, and he led me into wildness. He was wicked, unscrupulous, not stopping even at crime. He bears another name than mine, for I took my mother's name of Ryve with her fortune, which I have wasted. He lived with a noble patron, and his life is outwardly noble and virtuous. His name is Piers Dalryell. But, Diana, while he and I are so like that even you, at first glance, would not know one of us from the other, this brother of mine has been my evil genius from the hour he attained his manhood. He led me into all the folly and wickedness I have committed. What I am he has made me. But I have now reached a turning-point in my life. With your help, my wife, I will from this hour live a true and good life!"

The girl smiled, but there was a mist of tears in her eyes.

"Have faith in me, dear," said Ryve, with the earnestness of a man pleading for his life. "Trust me. Help me. Plead with your father to give me one single chance to retrieve myself. I will be his son, his slave even. Diana, I have not told you all. I have been guilty of a crime!"

"A crime! You, Philip?"

She stared at him, amazed, incredulous.

"It is true. Piers Dalryell, my brother, induced me to commit it. He said no harm should come of it. I—I signed a name not my own, Diana, but Piers shared the money, and he said that he would take care of the note before it came due. That is the only thing on my conscience, Diana. No harm can result from that. Piers is sure to have taken up the note. And now I have laid my soul bare to you. Can you love me longer? Do you repent our marriage?"

The glances of his pleading eyes, full of despairing love penetrated to the girl's inmost soul.

"No," she answered, impulsively. "I love you, Philip. I will help you to be a better man. You must not see your wicked brother again. Come with me to papa. Let us tell him all. He will befriend you, Philip. He will be kind to us both."

Philip Ryve bent and kissed his young wife reverently, and then helped her into her saddle and mounted to his own.

A load had been removed from him. He felt like a man who has been condemned to instant death, and suddenly finds himself reprieved. A host of good resolves sprang up within him. He determined to prove himself worthy the love of this maiden,

"I will die before a shadow of disgrace shall come to her!" he said to himself.

They rode on together, more swiftly now, being eager to reach The Yews. The gray, dull sky, the keen air, the thickening snowflakes—they had no thought of these. To both these young hearts the day was bright and beautiful.

They galloped through the village of Loddiston, not seeing a small group of men at the little inn watching them curiously; but once again upon the heath they slackened their pace to a walk.

As they neared Diana's home a feeling of apprehension came upon them both. They began to dread the meeting with Mr. Paulet.

Suddenly Diana uttered an exclamation. She had beheld her gray-haired groom, Denton, coming towards her across the heath.

The young pair were so absorbed in watching the approach of the servant that they did not hear the sound of hoofs behind them, and almost in the same moment that Denton met them they were overtaken by two mounted men who had followed them from Loddiston.

These men had an official air, and as they rode in front and beside Philip Ryve, one of them grasped his horse by the bridle, thus completely preventing the young man's escape.

Diana experienced a thrill of gathering terror. "Is your name Philip Ryve?" demanded one of the two men, in a harsh, abrupt voice.

Ryve turned pale, looked around him as if in the hope of escape, then bowed assent.

"Philip Ryve," said the officer, "I arrest you in the name of Her Majesty the Queen, for the crime of forgery. Here is the warrant for your arrest."

Ryve uttered a wild cry, and struck his horse sharply, but there was no way of escape. The officers held him securely.

No way of escape? Ah, yes, one way remained to him! One look at the girl's white, horror-stricken face, one thought of her blighted young life, one thought of the scandal that must ruin her name and happiness for ever, and Philip Ryve had found a way of escape.

He thrust his hand into his bosom, drew out a pistol, there was a sharp, ringing sound, and Philip Ryve fell heavily from his saddle, a thin stream of dull red colour staining his coat.

The officers were beside him in an instant. They tore open his coat and laid bare his wound. "He is dead," said one, briefly. "He is gone to a higher court to answer for his crimes!"

Diana had sat in a stupor. Now she reeled in her saddle, and fell forward in a dead swoon, Denton catching her in his arms.

(To be continued.)

LOVE'S PERILS.

CHAPTER XXIV.

FOUR years have passed away since the fall of Toulon, crowded with public events of the highest importance. But as our narrative deals with the fortunes of individuals, incidentally connected only with historical characters, we shall resume the career of Gerard Lorraine at a point which will probably interest the reader.

When Napoleon's star began to climb from the horizon and Italy presented a splendid field of conquest, he sent Gerard to Venice, to take up his residence there, to watch the temper and movements of the people and rulers and to keep him informed of all that transpired in that strange and time-hallowed republic.

Gerard had faithfully performed his secret duties, but his mind had not been wholly engrossed by them. A casual acquaintance with a beautiful Venetian girl had ripened into a warm attachment, which she reciprocated. The opposition manifested by her adopted mother, a matron who held the important office of guardian of the relics of St. Mark, and who was a fanatical hater of France and Frenchmen, only strengthened the attachment of the warm-hearted girl to her lover. Indeed, she had adopted the extreme step of forsaking old Leona's roof and had taken up her abode in a small and half-ruinous building abutting on a palace in the immediate vicinity of the Piazza of St. Mark.

Thither, as we resume our narrative, Gerard, accompanied by a certain fisherman, named Lazaro, was wending his steps.

Arrived at Angela's door, Gerard knocked thrice, and, receiving no answer, entered, followed by his friend. The room was very plainly furnished, but was exquisitely neat. One of the windows opened on to the canal. The most conspicuous object in the room was an image of the Madonna in a niche, whose ornaments of votive flowers testified to the devotional bent of the occupant of the apartment.

"Angela expected me," said Gerard, taking a

seat and signing to his friend to follow his example: "She will soon be here."

"And to-morrow, you tell me," said Lazaro, "I am to be a witness of your happiness."

"Yes," replied Gerard, "to-morrow, unless Dame Fortune, who has been but a harsh stepmother to me, plays me another of her sorry tricks, I shall be the husband of the best and loveliest of women."

"So," said Lazaro, "Angela, the Venetian, the adopted daughter of the guardian of the relics of St. Mark, consents to forsake her country with you, a Frenchman, for her husband."

"You know it well, for you are our mutual confidant. Of course she will shed some tears at leaving Venice. But what would she not do for my sake?"

"You yourself," said Lazaro, "are attached to your country, though she has on the whole used you hardly. I can scarcely conceive of such devotion. My birthplace was an old boat: when that went to pieces and left me floating in the lagoon to shift for myself and sink or swim, as I chose, I felt that all ties were severed. Chance threw me on the shore of Venice, but I serve France from inclination. Why don't you remain where you are?"

"I can't," replied Lorraine. "At any moment war may break out between the two governments."

"Very likely. The two republics are like women—young and old cannot agree together a great while."

"My residence at Venice has become insupportable," said Lorraine. "Since I have accomplished all the objects that brought me hither I have had many quarrels on account of my nationality."

"Your temper gets the best of your judgment sometimes," said Lazaro. "You have dared publicly to express your doubts of the magnanimity of the Council of Ten, you do not believe in the clemency of inquisitors, and you even take it amiss that the fish in the Orfano Canal are fed with prisoners of state. You ought to be silent and yet active."

"What do you mean?" asked Gerard, eyeing his companion sharply.

"I'll tell you," replied Lazaro. "At Venice there is a French party moving in the dark. Bonaparte, by a victory, might destroy the republic, but such is not his wish. He would only establish a free and liberal government, and if he could succeed without the effusion of blood he would prefer it."

"You are right there."

"The nobles are against us, and a portion of the credulous people support them in their fanaticism. The time for the master-stroke has not yet come. In the meanwhile, and by way of preliminary, last night, favoured by the darkness, I removed the national standard from the statue of St. Mark and fastened a tricoloured cockade to the lion's mane. You would never have thought of that."

"No, for I should have deemed the lion of St. Mark unworthy of wearing the French colours."

"I have told you all now. I once saved you from drowning at the Rialto. I know that you are grateful. Be discreet—a word to the wise."

"Yes, I will be discreet," answered Lorraine, who, however, was not a little disturbed at this communication.

"Whatever I do, I do secretly," said Lazaro. "Now follow my advice. Marry Angela if you will, but remain in Venice and join our conspiracy."

"I have had enough of underhand plottings," said Gerard. "The place for a brave man is not in Venice, but in the ranks of the French army. I understand but little and have still less relish for the sort of warfare you propose to me. Whatever the Venetians may be, I wish to meet them face to face on the field of battle. I am more decided than ever to go."

"I see," said Lazaro, with a smile, "you are one of those punctilious men who think there is no straight road but the longest one."

Whatever reply Gerard might have made was cut short by the entrance of a beautiful young girl who hastily shut the door behind her. She wore a pretty lace cap with gold embroidery, and her scarlet velvet bodice and white sleeves well set off the asymmetry of her form. Her countenance was flushed with excitement, and there was an expression of anxiety in her black eyes, which changed instantly to one of pleasure the moment they recognized Gerard. She pressed his hand warmly and cordially.

"You appear to be much moved, Angela," said Gerard, after a moment. "Has anything happened?"

"Nothing—nothing whatever," replied Angela, hurriedly.

"Has any one insulted you?" inquired Lorraine.

"No—no—nothing of the sort," replied Angela, in an agitated voice. "May he never know the cause of my emotion!" was her mental prayer.

"You cannot conceal your agitation, dearest," said Lorraine. "Tell me, I beg of you, what has happened?"

"Well, then," said Angela, "as I crossed the great square I noticed a large crowd of people very much excited, and loudly denouncing the French."

"What of that?" said Lazaro. "That's their custom—I should be alarmed if they stopped their usual noise, because then I should think they were going to act."

"But this time at least they had a motive," said Angela. "It is asserted that tricoloured badges were found this morning on all the national monuments of Venice."

"What did I tell you?" whispered Lazaro to Gerard.

"Take care," replied Gerard, in the same tone. "You are the only one who knows it," whispered Lazaro.

"I went out this morning," continued Angela, "to inform Leona, who has been more than a mother to me, of my intended departure. She was not at home—and I discovered her at the base of St. Mark's statue, addressing the people, who all have faith in her predictions, with her hair flowing wildly on her shoulders, and her face inflamed with excitement. She was loading the French with anathemas. I dared not speak to her, and sadly refrained my steps hither."

"And now, perhaps," said Gerard, "after what you have seen, you will not hesitate to marry me and fly with me."

"No," replied Angela, "though my heart bleeds at the thought of leaving my dear Leona, and my dear Venice, yet I have pledged my word to you. Your ways are my ways—your people are my people—and your country is henceforth my country."

"Dear Angela! Ah, Lazaro! am I not a happy man?" cried Gerard.

"Yes, indeed," replied the fisherman. "And you'd make me envious—only I'm too busy for that."

"Then, to-morrow, Angela," said Gerard, "you will be my wife!"

"Yes, to-morrow," replied the young girl.

"Come, Lazaro," said Gerard. "Come with me and aid me in my preparations. You have ever been my best friend."

"Yes, ever since I saved your life I've been strangely attached to you. I never loved any body before, and was even often out of sorts with myself."

"I shall soon see you again!" said Angela.

"Within an hour," replied Gerard.

He raised the fair hand that was presented to him to his lips, and then left with his friend.

The moment she was left alone the same terror that had shewed itself on the young girl's countenance on her first entrance resumed its sway over her beautiful features. Her brows contracted, her eyes dilated, and she traversed the small apartment to and fro with hasty and unequal steps. Her thoughts found vent in the following broken sentences:

"This masked stranger who follows me incessantly—whence comes he? I did not wish to speak of it to Gerard, because when I was with my protectress, the guardian of the relics of St. Mark, I often saw his strange figure ascending the Giant's Staircase, and through his mask his glittering eyes glared on me: since I quitted the asylum of my infancy his pursuit has been more audacious—this very hour he dogged my steps; but now I breathe freer—and to-morrow I shall have nothing to alarm me."

She stopped suddenly, and uttered a faint cry of terror, for, on turning, her eyes encountered the figure of a man wrapped in a black cloak and wearing a mask of the same colour beneath his slouched hat.

"Who are you?" she exclaimed. "What do you want of me? What are you?"

"What do I want?" replied the stranger, in a deep voice, which increased the terror of the lonely and unprotected girl. You can imagine. Who am I? I am one who can accomplish whatever he wills."

"Do you think to terrify me?"

"Heaven is my witness," replied the stranger, "that I desire to awaken an emotion gentler than fear in your breast."

"If it be my love you seek," answered Angela, firmly and proudly, "know that I bestow it not on one who, to obtain control over a woman, stoops to play the spy, and whose brow has doubtless cause to blush, since it is hidden beneath a mask."

"This mask," said the stranger, "will be removed on the day that you are mine—when you have bestowed your hand on me."

"It is no longer mine to bestow," answered Angela. "My heart and hand are given to another."

"I have been told that a French man dares to love you, and to avow it."

"You dare do the same," said Angela. "How do I know whether that mask conceals a Frenchman or a Venetian—unless it hides a man without a name or country?"

"This mask, Angela," was the reply, "hides the face of a man who loves you, and who will win you sooner or later, cost what it may. Do you think this Frenchman will prevent me?"

"Yes for to-morrow I shall be his wife."

"To-morrow!" said the mask. "I thank you for telling me how much time I have left for action—this delay is ample. Angela, I have power enough to make Venice bend to my will. Do not force me to try the extent of my influence over you."

"I defy your power, while Gerard is here to protect me."

Their interview was here interrupted by the shouts of the people in the square without: "Honour to Leona! Viva San Marco!"

"Leona here!" exclaimed Angela. "Oh, sir," she added to the mask. "Whoever you are, fly! let her not find you here."

"I will retire, since you are inflexible," said the stranger, going to the window.

"That window," said Angela, following his steps, "opens on the canal."

"My gondola awaits me there," said the mask.

"I shall be able to get off unperceived."

"A gondola moored so near my dwelling!" cried Angela.

"Compose yourself," said the mask. "This time, at least, it serves no sinister purpose. But if great crimes are committed in Venice this night—that you have told me will serve to indicate the criminal. Angela—farewell—we shall meet again!"

And he swept like a dark shadow through the open casement, so noiselessly that he might have been deemed an apparition vanishing into the shades of night.

The door opened at this moment, and a tall female, whose noble features had not yet robbed of the majesty of beauty, richly and somewhat fantastically attired in a dark purple velvet robe, embroidered with arabesque figures in gold, her gray hair escaping from a sort of turban of the same material, entered the apartment. She was followed by a number of men, artisans, and goldsmiths, a few of whom crossed the threshold, while the majority remained without.

"Courage, children of Venice!" said Leona, for it was the venerated guardian of the relics of St. Mark. "Fear not the armies that threaten the republic. Heaven protects us. Venice is invincible and immortal. Glory to St. Mark, and malediction on the French!"

"Glory to St. Mark! honour to Leona!" shouted the multitude, as they retired, leaving Leona alone with her adopted daughter.

Angela hastened to seat the matron in an arm-chair, and then knelt at her feet, and looked up timidly into her face.

Leona answered the appealing look by a glance at once penetrating and stern.

"You did not expect to see me here?" she said.

"I dared not hope you would come," said Angela, timidly. "And yet I sought you this morning."

"When I learned that you had forgotten fifteen years of maternal care at the first declaration of love from an enemy," answered Leona, "my fright was greater than my anger—and I hurried hither to save you—if it was not too late."

"To save me!" said Angela. "What danger do I incur?"

"What danger? Do you ask me, girl? Are you not prepared to follow this man to France—or whithersoever he wills?"

"I will follow my husband," said Angela, casting down her eyes.

"You know not what you say—you know not what you do," said Leona, in an agitated manner. "I know these Frenchmen only too well. Rise and seat yourself beside me."

The young girl obeyed, trembling.

"Never have I breathed a whisper to you," pursued Leona, in a gentler tone, "of my early and sad story. And I will tell it now, notwithstanding the agony it causes, in the hope that a knowledge of my errors and misfortunes may save you from the woes I have experienced. Years ago, when I was young and beautiful, as you are, like you, I lost my heart to a Frenchman of rank. I abandoned my mother, as you have abandoned me, and fled to France with him. For a brief season he was a devoted bridegroom. I was young and careless, but never did I do ought to provoke the furious jealousy which soon mastered him. He abandoned me—abandoned me in a strange country. I was ignorant of its language and its people. Deserted, almost penniless, alone in the world—a son was born to me. What wonder that my reason tottered—abandoned me. I found myself, when my senses returned, in a deserted cottage. Weak and despairing, I rose from my bed of straw and tottered out

into the air. Begging my bread from village to village, and guided more by instinct than by reason, I wandered through France, climbed the Alps, traversed Italy on foot, and so finally got back to Venice—only in time to close my dying mother's eyes. At her death-bed I swore eternal enmity to France and all her children. And now you, Angela, to whom I have been as a mother—who have been to me as a child—you in my declining years forsake me for one of that accursed race."

"Ah, my dear, kind friend and protectress!" cried Angela. "What have you told me?"

"The sacred truth," replied Leona. "Will you now follow the Frenchman?"

"He has my promise—my vow," said poor Angela.

"I had his who basely deserted me," replied Leona.

"But I love him more than life."

"I loved him more than heaven, but he abandoned me!"

"Oh, I shall die! I shall die!" cried Angela, wringing her hands in agony.

"I lost my love—I lost my child—and yet I live," said Leona, sternly.

"Some one comes hither," said Angela, springing to her feet. "It is Gerard."

"Gerard here!" cried Leona, rising.

"For pity's sake!" implored Angela, "say not a word before him."

Before Leona could reply Gerard was in the room, but he recoiled on recognising Leona.

The latter did not deign even to look at Angela's suitor, but, bidding the girl adieu in a cold tone, swept majestically out of the house.

"Angela!" cried Gerard, pressing the cold hand of his beloved, "there is not a moment to lose. But what mean these tears?"

"Gerard," said the poor girl, faintly. "Forget me—all is over between us. Let me go back to her who has been a mother to me. She has told me such a tale of the perfidy of your countrymen that my heart has died within me."

"So!" cried Gerard, "a word—a calumny has sufficed to crush all the proofs of a devoted attachment! I did not expect this of you, Angela."

"Would to Heaven that it was a calumny. But I cannot doubt her—and I cannot disobey. Gerard, I can never be yours."

"And your resolution is irrevocable?"

"Irrevocable," said Angela.

"Since it is thus," said Gerard, "so be it. My fate is fixed. A man's misery can only last him his lifetime—and there are those who will spare me the trouble of falling by my own hand."

"What do you mean?" cried Angela. "Your dark and sombre looks alarm me. For mercy's sake—"

Gerard took the young girl's hand, and, leading her to the window, bade her look forth.

"Behold," said he, "the myrmidons of power gathered on the square. They halt before my humble dwelling. The herald of the republic unfolds a parchment. Listen to the proclamation!"

Angela bent from her casement, and saw a crowd collected.

Signor Grande, the herald, proceeded to read, and every word was audible to the agonized listener.

The proclamation was as follows:

"Thou, Gerard Lorraine, Frenchman, art declared guilty of having profaned the sacred monuments of Venice by affixing thereto the insignia of thy country. Now, therefore, the Council of Three gives thee one hour to leave the city. If, on the stroke of nine, thou art still in Venice, thy dwelling shall be destroyed, and thou thyself punished as a state criminal."

Angela retired from the casement, and pressed her hand to her heart.

"You asked me what I meant?" said Gerard, sadly: "and you are answered by yon proclamation."

"But your life is menaced—fly!" cried Angela, wildly.

"Not without you."

"Oh, Gerard!" cried the poor girl, "you are cruel. I wounded your kind heart—let my repentant tears plead my pardon. I knew not what I said. Oh, fly!"

"My life is not worth saving, Angela, if it is to be a life of suffering. I have endured too much already."

"But you will return to your country," pleaded Angela.

"Where you are—there is my country," replied Gerard. "I will remain here. My resolution is as inflexible as yours."

Angela clasped her hands and raised her eyes to Heaven.

"Pardon me, holy patron saint of Venice," she murmured; "and thou, my kind protectress, for what I am about to do."

"What!" exclaimed Gerard. "You relent—you will follow me."

"I will. Before this sacred image of the Madon-

na, I swear it," said the agitated girl. "But we must not be seen together. Await me at the farthest pier—at the Red Tower—I will rejoin you; nothing now shall keep us apart."

"You have given me life!" cried Gerard, clasping her in his arms. "Tarry not—the minutes will be hours till I clasp your hand again."

He pressed a kiss upon her pallid brow and rushed out of the house.

Angela fell upon her knees before the Madonna, and prayed long and earnestly. Then, rising, with a calmer spirit, resolved and firm, she was moving to the door, when it slowly turned upon its hinges, and gave way to the passage of the masked stranger.

"You here again!" she cried. "Oh, leave me! leave me!"

"I know your purpose," said the stranger. "Angela, you shall not go to Lorraine, for Venice will not that one of her daughters should share the exile of an enemy. Gerard must fly alone."

"Venice is all-powerful," replied Angela; "but Venice is not powerful enough to keep me from the man I love."

(To be continued.)

It was the Empress Eugénie who resolved that the Prince Imperial should do duty as a subaltern, attached to his battery during the summer drills, in preference to his serving on the staff, the selection between the two having been left to Her Majesty.

AVOID GOSSIP.—We condemn gossip—scandal's twin sister—yet it is a fault easily committed. We begin by a gentle deprecatory reference to somebody's infirmity of temper, and we find ourselves specifying a particular time and scene, which straightway the one who hears tells again to some one else with additions, slight, perhaps, but material. Before we know it we have stirred up a hornet's nest. This may be done without any more potent motive than a mere love of fun—and half the gossip in the social world is of the unthinking kind, indulged in merely from a spirit of drollery. Far worse is that other sort of talk which ends in slander and begins in malice, and which separates friends and sunders the ties of years of intercourse with its sharp and jarring discords. The only way to avoid the evil is to refrain from making the affairs of our friends a staple article of conversation in the household. There are plenty of subjects at hand—let us avoid personalities.

THE RULER OF ZANZIBAR.—The Sultan's impressions of his visit to Her Majesty at Windsor are thus rendered by his translator, and the remarks show our visitor to be a courtier in the true sense of the word and a man of sense and shrewdness. The Sultan said: "I have now seen with my eyes what I have so long desired to see, Her Majesty the Queen of England. My father, who has been taken to the mercy of the Merciful, used often to talk to us of the Queen Victoria, but he died without seeing her. I now tell you why I have so often said that it was the summit of my ambition to see the face of Her Majesty. It was this. I have met many Englishmen in my time, not only of the Royal Navy and Army, but also civilians, merchants, and travellers, and I wondered why they all spoke of their sovereign, not in a formal way as did the people of other nations, but with enthusiasm and affection. This made me mentally to liken her to that mountain of loadstone mentioned in the 'Thousand and One Nights,' which drew the nails out of the sides of the ships which passed that way. Even so did the hearts of the Englishmen I have hitherto met seem to be drawn as by a magnet to Her Majesty. I come to England and find the same hearty loyalty pervading all classes. You saw the thousands the other evening at the Crystal Palace all stand up when the music played the Queen's Hymn. No one tells them to stand, but they stand up of their own accord from affection to her. And so wonder; for verily she is the centre of all the glory, all the greatness, all the prosperity of this grand empire. And she is a woman, too! Praise be to the Sovereign Creator who endows whom He will with fitness to rule and with qualities to attract loyalty and affection! I fancied that I should have been overwhelmed when I had the honour of seeing the face of the Queen. I was, indeed, wonderstruck with the sumptuousness which surrounded her; but here is the simple majesty with captivates, not that which bewilders. Nevertheless, she was majestic in her simplicity, and my heart wept for her when I saw the two princesses, her royal daughters, by her side, and remembered that her beloved consort had been taken to the mercy of God. May the great God bless her and her Royal offspring, and the mighty people over whom she rules! I can say no more, for words fail to express what my heart feels. A thousand times I say, God bless her!" The Rev. Dr. Badger interpreted between Her Majesty and the Sultan.



[THE DAFFODIL.]

FLOWERS: THEIR LANGUAGE, SENTIMENT, SYMBOLS AND INTERPRETATION.

BY PHILANTHOS.

VOCABULARY.

CROWFOOT, CELERY-LEAVED. Ingratitude.—See Buttercup, ante.

This is the *Ranunculus Sceleratus*, the "Detestable Buttercup," of botanists, and is certainly the most acrid of its tribe. It flowers in June and July, by the side of pools and ditches, bearing blossoms of a pale yellow, and is about a foot or eighteen inches in height. Its pale-green, smooth leaves, cut into oblong segments, are like those of celery, and very pretty. It is found in most meadows in all parts of the kingdom, lives very far north, even in Lapland and Greenland, and has been observed at the very limits of vegetation by Arctic voyagers.

I rather like this plant as the Emblem of Ingratitude, for it appears to have been used in olden times by begging impostors to produce ulcers on their legs and arms, to excite the compassion of charitable persons. It has an additional claim to the title inasmuch as it does not even secrete honey for the industrious bee. John Clare, the Northamptonshire poet, has noted this unamiable peculiarity of the Celery-leaved Crowfoot:—

I wander out and rhyme,
What hour the dewy morning's infancy
Hangs on each blade of grass and every tree,
And sprengs the red thighs of the humble-bee,
Who gins betimes unwearied minstrelsy;
Who breakfasts, dines, and most divinely sups
With every flower save golden Buttercups,
On whose proud bosom he will never go;
But passes by with scarcely "How do ye do?"
Since in their showy, shining, gaudy cells
Haply the summer honey never dwells.

CROWFOOT, ACOWITE-LEAVED. Lustre.
I take this to be the Ivy-leaved Crowfoot
(*Ranunculus hederaeifolius*), which flowers throughout

the summer in places where water has stood in winter. There are several white-flowered varieties, as the Alpine Crowfoot, etc. Or perhaps Greater Spearwort is meant.

CROWN IMPERIAL. (*Fritillaria imperialis*). Snake-Head Lily. Majesty. Power.—See Lily, and Fritillary, Chequered.

CROWSBILL. ENVY.

This may be an error for Cranesbill; but as Envy has already the Bramble, or Wild Briar (See Bramble), we would omit it as doubtful.

CUCKOO-PLANT. Ardour. Zeal.—See Arum.

CUDWEED, AMERICAN. Unceasing Remembrance.

As we have four or more varieties of Cudweed here, and as one sort of it was imported, in a dried state, in the time of old Gerard (1594) as African Cudwort, or Chaffweed. I shall confine myself to our well-known native plants (*gnaphalium*) as the Symbol of Unceasing Remembrance. Of the *Gnaphalium Inteo-album*, the Jersey Cudweed, the *Gnaphalium Sylvestrum* (Highland Cudweed) and the greenhouse plant *Gnaphalium Orientale* (African Cudweed) are best known. The last is commonly called "Everlasting," and the French name them "Immortelles"; the first is found in various parts of the country, besides the island of Jersey, and so also is the Highland variety, notwithstanding its name.

The Yellow Everlasting (*Gnaphalium Orientale*), sold in such enormous quantities in France and here, in garlands, crosses and crowns, derives its name from the durability of the chaffy flower-scales. It is a perennial, cottony plant, and may be easily cultivated in a warm, light, and dry soil. The ancients used the cotton picked from the foliage of this class of plant, instead of wool, for the stuffing of couches and mattresses.

The visitor to the Cemetery of Père-le-Chaise must have been struck with the innumerable yellow wreaths and garlands of Cudweed which decorate the tombs of the eminent as well as the obscure. This ancient and graceful custom was common in Greece and Rome, and in Spain and Portugal they are used to deck images.

Though there are some purple and white Everlastings, which can be raised in hotbeds or green-houses, the various colours in the shops are produced by dyeing the yellow flowers being stained orange, green, or black; a proceeding which we beg to denounce as in vile bad taste.

When you cut Everlastings—we like this name best—for drying, do so before the bloom is fully open, and hang them heels upward till they are quite rigid before you make them up into the form you may desire.

Gerarde, we may note, calls Cudweed "Golden Motherwort," and says, "in form it resembleth the scaly flower of tansie." He adds that "if gathered before they be ripe they remaine beautiful a long tyme, as myself did see in the hands of Master Wade, one of the clerkes of Her Maiestie's Counsell, which was sent to him among other things from Padua, in Italy." Master Wade, the "Clerke of Her Maiestie's Counsell," we will venture to say, little thought his only niche in the temple of fame would be owing to that little wreath of immortelles which some learned Doctor of Padua sent him from "Italie," and still less that an account of his garden in Holborn, which he instituted, would have failed to preserve his name to posterity had not the worthy old John Gerard, gardener to my Lord Burleigh, come up from Nantwich, and written his "Catalogus Arborum Fructuum, et Plantarum, tam indigenarum quam exoticarum, in horto Joh. Gerardi," and further recorded in his "Herbal" the fact of this great personage being presented with a bunch of Cudweed! Master Gerard and Master Wade have outlived, and will outlive, in company with this garland of Immortelles, many generals and admirals who lie sculptured in St. Paul's and the Abbey.

CURRANT. Thy Frown will Kill Me.

CUSCUTA. Meanness.—See Dodder.

CYCLAMEN. SOWBREED. Diffidence.

The wild Cyclamen, with its flesh-coloured flowers nodding on long, slender, pinkish stalks, is common in many places, especially in Kent, and flowers on till September. Its large, acrid, tuberous root, which is eagerly sought by pigs, points out its English name. The common sort is the *C. hederifolium* (Ivy-leaved Sowbread), but there are several pretty varieties of this singular flower in our gardens. The Austrian Cyclamen is very fragrant, and the Persian, which flowers very early, is very beautiful. The French name is, like the English, *Pain de porreau*; in Italy its roots are called *Ground-bread* (*Pane Terreno*), and in some counties *Pignuta*.

The old tubers of the Cyclamen Persicum, grown in a pot, in which they will grow for years by changing some of the soil, will produce large tufts of purple and white or pink flowers, so graceful in their shape that William Hogarth chose them as illustrations of "The Line of Beauty." All the Cyclamens may be raised from seeds, sown immediately they are ripe, in pans of light earth, under glass. The tubers, after flowering, must be kept in a dry, airy place during the period of annual rest, from July to December.

CYPRUS. (*Cypripedium Sempervirens*). Mourning.

Death.

The Cypress has been accepted in all times as the Funeral Emblem. "The Cypress is the Emblem of Mourning," says Shakespeare; and Ovid, in his "Metamorphoses," tells the schoolboy how an especial favourite of Apollo, bright Cyparissus, was transformed into the tree which bears his name. Having accidentally slain his pet stag, the youth became so melancholy mad that he actually prayed the gods to make his life everlastingly gloomy and mournful. His dismal prayer was complied with, and he was transformed into a Cypress Tree. Here is the account of how the metamorphosis was carried out:

When, lost in tears, the blood his veins forsakes,
His every limb a grassy hue partakes;
His flowing tresses, stiff and bushy grown,
Point to the stars and taper to a cone.
Apollo thus: "Ah, youth, beloved in vain,
Long shall thy boughs the gloom I feel retain:
Henceforth when mourners grieve, their grief
Share.

Emblem of woe, the Cypress shall be there.

Sir Walter Scott's spirited poem of "the Cypress Wreath" is too thoroughly floral to be omitted without incurring the censure of the admirers of charming thoughts "married to immortal verse."

Oh, lady, twine no wreath for me!
Or twine it of the Cypress Tree!
Too lively glow the lilies bright,
The varnished holly's all too bright;
The Mayflower and the eglantine
May shade a brow less sad than mine.
Then, lady, weave no wreath for me,
Or weave it of the Cypress Tree.

Let dimpled mirth his temples twine
With tendrils of the laughing vine;
The stately oak, the pensive yew,
To patriot and to sage be due.
The myrtle bough bids lovers live;
But that Matilda will not give.
Then, lady, twine no wreath for me,
Or twine it of the Cypress Tree.

Let merry England proudly rear
Her blended roses, bought so dear;
Let Albin bind her bonnet blue
With heath and harebell dipped in dew;
On favoured Erin shall be seen
The flower she loves, of emerald green.
But, lady, twine no wreath for me,
Or twine it of the Cypress Tree.

Strike the wild harp, while maids prepare
The ivy meet for minstrel's hair;
And while his crown of laurel leaves
With bloody hand the victor weaves,
Let the loud trumpet trump his triumph tell;
But when you hear the passing bell,
Then, lady, twine a wreath for me,
And twine it of the Cypress Tree.

Yes, twine for me the Cypress bough;
But, oh, Matilda, twine not now;
Stay till a few brief months are past,
And I have looked and loved my last,
When villagers my shroud bestrew
With pansies, rosemary, and rue,
Then, lady, weave a wreath for me,
And weave it of the Cypress Tree.

DAFFODIL. (*Narcissus pseudo-Narcissus*.) *Rogard.*

We love this gay yellow bulbous flower as one of our earliest spring visitors. Our old poets, Spenser, Drayton, and the fifteenth century writers, make it an especial favourite.

Spenser represents maidens as:—

Gathering sweet Daffodillies to have made
Gay garlands from the sun their foreheads fair to shade.

A lady, flower-decked has

Upon her head a crimson coronet
With Daffodils and damask roses set.

Milton, in his "Lycidas," desires that—

The Daffodillies fill their cups with tears
To strew the laureate hearse where Lycid lies.

Shakespeare places it first among the flowers the frightened Proserpine fell all when seized by Pluto:

Daffodils,
That come before the swallow dares, and take
The winds of March with beauty.

Jean Ingelow has a beautiful little poem called "Persephone," in which the ancient fable is versified, and the Daffodil thus introduced:

She stepped upon Sicilian grass,
Demeter's daughter fresh and fair,
A child of light, a radiant lass,
And gamesome as the morning air,
The Daffodils were fair to see;
They nodded lightly on the lea.

So one she marked of finer growth
Than orchis or anemone;
For it the maiden left them both,
And parted from her company;
Drawn nigh, she deemed it fairer still,
And stooped to gather by the rill
The Daffodil, the Daffodil.

"Oh, light, oh, light!" she cries "farewell;
The coal-black horses wait for me.
Oh, shade of shades I must dwell,
Demeter, mother, far from thee.
Oh, fated doom that I fulfil;
Oh, fated flower beside the rill—
The Daffodil, the Daffodil!"

As to Wordsworth, whom Byron ridicules as "going dancing with the Daffodils," he is enraptured at the sight of a crowd of these yellow bells at the margin of a lake:—

I wandered, lonely as a cloud,
That floats on high o'er dales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden Daffodils,
Beside the lake beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle in the Milky Way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The wild flower differs from the garden one in being single and somewhat paler than when cultivated. It is generally found in moist woods or thickets, and under hedgerows; and old Gerarde

speaks of several varieties in his time, especially a dark yellow one "from his friend Robinus of Paris," and another called the Spanish Daffodil, "which doth increase wonderfully in our London gardens;" as do the ordinary double Daffodils to this day, if you do not allow the jolting gardener to cut off the rank green leaves when it has done flowering, to "make your place look tidy," as he says. If you do you will have no yellow Daffodils next spring. Rather than this take up the bulbs, keep them a little while, and return them to the earth minus their leaves, and you shall be rewarded by their brightness when March comes round.

To be continued.

SCIENCE.

MEASUREMENTS OF TERRESTRIAL MAGNETISM.—Attention is called by Braun to the practicability of applying the inclinometer to the determination of the intensity of terrestrial magnetism. This was first suggested and applied by Lamont and Lloyd, but seems to have been generally neglected. Braun, however, shows that both theory and practice agree in proving that this method allows of the same degree of accuracy as that attainable by the best magnetometers. In detail he finds that Lloyd's method gives the total intensity more accurately than the horizontal intensity, but by the magnetometer method the reverse is the case. The accuracy of the results obtained by Braun is attributed, in part, to the great perfection of the inclination needles that are now made in England, and he recommends earnestly the inclinometer as a portable magnetic instrument, upon the score of accuracy, convenience, and cheapness; since with it one may make a complete series of magnetic observations, without also carrying declinometer, magnetometer, reflecting circle, theodolite, or clock. A simple addition to the instrument even allows him to make absolute, as well as relative, determinations.

EFFECT ON SOUND AND LIGHT OF THE MOVEMENT OF THE OBSERVER.—The long vexed question as to the effect upon observations of the movement of the observer, and the source of light or sound, has been elucidated by Baron Eotvos, of Pesth, who, in a recent communication, extends his former investigations, and offers a satisfactory refutation of several objections that have been raised. According to him, in case the source of sound or light be moving, the intensity must be defined as the living force that would fall, in a unit of time, upon a unit of surface, parallel to the wave surface, if all vibrations were like those which are imparted to the surface at that instant in which the intensity is to be determined. The formulae for the intensity in question, as deduced by Eotvos, shows that the movement of the observer has a decided effect upon the result, and by applying this to the case of an observer moving upon a locomotive, with a velocity of an hundred feet per second, and listening to a sound whose origin moves at the same rate, he finds the observed sound eight times as loud as when both are at rest. A method is also explained by him, showing the possibility of testing his conclusions by experiments on the heat received and sent by moving bodies.

A CARNIVOROUS AND BRUTAL PLANT.—At a recent meeting of the Edinburgh Botanical Society, Dr. Balfour read notes of experiments he had been making on *dionaea muscipula* and allied plants. These experiments painfully confirmed the suspicions entertained by Ellis, Curtis, Hooker, and Darwin, that the *dionaea* is a carnivorous, and, it may be added, a most brutal plant. Dr. Balfour classified the facts he had observed in regard to it under the heads of irritability, it seems, is resident in six delicate hairs, so placed on the surface of the leaf that no insect can avoid touching them in crawling over. Dr. Balfour touched with a needle every other part of the leaf and no response followed; but no sooner was the point applied to one of those hairs than a contraction of the life ensued. Chloroform dropped on a hair caused the leaf to close like a winking eye, but water had no such effect. It was only when the object seized was capable of affording nutrition that the contraction continued for any considerable length of time. A piece of wood was soon released, and so was a dried fly; but when a live fly or caterpillar or spider was enclosed the contraction lasted on an average for about three weeks. The leaf at the same time gave out a viscid acid secretion. This appeared to be only the case when an insect was captured, and it was always present on such occasions; but whereas with a fat spider it was abundant, with a shrivelled fly there was very little. The notion that any nourishment was obtained from the insects so enclosed has been controverted; but Dr. Balfour pointed significantly to the facts that young plants of *dionaea* under bell-glasses had been found not to thrive so well as those left free, and that while a piece of beef wrapped in another leaf became

putrid, a piece enclosed by the *dionaea* remained perfectly inodorous, but soon lost its red colour, and was gradually disintegrated more and more till it was reduced to pulp. This statement showing the greediness and ferocity of the *dionaea*, created quite a painful sensation among the members of the Botanical Society, and the chairman, while recommending a continuance of the experiments, wisely suggested that they should be completed before the Anti-Vivisection Act comes into operation.

ELECTRO-METALLURGY.

THE deposition of metals in the process of electro-metallurgy is of two kinds, electroplating and electrolytizing. When our object is to coat a metal with a thin metallic film of some other metal the object to be coated is immersed in a solution of some salt of the metal to be deposited. A current is passed from the bath to the object, so as to decompose the salt and deposit the metallic portion of it on the object, which is a negative electrode.

The art of copying seals, types, medals, etc., by the galvanic current in metal, more especially copper, is called electrolytizing. An impression is first taken in gutta serena, wax, fusible metal, or other substance which takes, when heated, a sharp impression. While the impression is still soft a wire is inserted into the side of it. It is then covered with plumbago to give it conductivity, a camel-hair brush being used for this purpose. The wire is then attached to the zinc pole of a weakly-charged Daniell's cell, and the copper plate is attached by a wire to the copper pole of the cell.

When the impression and the copper plate are dipped into a strong solution of the sulphate of copper they act as the minus and plus electrodes. The copper of the solution begins to deposit itself on the impression first of the black-loaded surface in the vicinity of the connecting wire, then it gradually creeps over the whole conducting surface.

After a day or two the impression is taken out; and the copper deposited on it, which has now formed a tolerably strong plate, can be easily removed by inserting the point of a knife between the impression and the edge of the plate. On the side of this plate, next the matrix, there is a perfect copy of the original seal.

The very useful art of coating the baser metals with silver by the galvanic current is called electrolytizing. Theoretically it is very simple, but it requires very considerable experience and skill to make a successful application of it. Articles that are electrolytized are generally made of brass, bronze, or copper. When tin, steel, iron, zinc, or lead is electrolytized, it must be first electrocoppered, as silver does not adhere to the bare surfaces of these metals.

Great care is taken in cleaning the articles previous to the electrolytizing, for any surface impurity would spoil the success of the operation. They are first boiled in caustic potash, to remove dry adhering grease; they are then immersed in dilute nitric acid, to dissolve any rust or oxide that may be formed on the surface; and they are finally scoured with fine sand. Before being put in the silvering bath they are washed with nitrate of mercury, which leaves a thin film of mercury on them, and this acts as a cement between the article and the silver.

The bath wherein the electrolytizing takes place is a large trough of earthenware or other non-conducting substance. It contains a weak solution of cyanide of silver in cyanide of potassium (water 100 parts; cyanide of potassium, 10 parts; cyanide of silver, 1 part). A plate of silver forms the plus electrode; and the articles to be plated, hung by pieces of wire to a metal rod lying across the trough, constitute the minus electrode. When the plate is connected with the copper or plus pole of a one or more celled galvanic battery, according to the strength required, and the rod is joined with the zinc or minus pole, chemical decomposition immediately ensues in the bath, the silver of the cyanide begins to deposit itself on the suspended objects, and the cyanogen, liberated at the plate, dissolves it, reforming the cyanide of silver.

According, then, as the solution is weakened by the loss of the metal going to form the electro coating, it is strengthened by the cyanide of silver formed at the plate. The thickness of the plating depends on the time of the immersion. The electric current thus acts as the carrier of the metal of the plate to the objects immersed. When the plated articles are taken from the bath they appear dull and white; the dullness is first removed by a small circular brush of brass wire driven by a lathe, and a final polish is given by burnishing.

The operation of electrolytizing very closely resembles that of electroplating. The solutions are always alkaline, and usually consist of the cyanide or chloride of the metal, dissolved in an alkaline cyanide. To prepare the gold bath, two ounces of

fine gold are dissolved in aqua regia, and the solution is evaporated till it has the consistence of syrup. Water is then added, together with two ounces of cyanide of potassium, and the mixture is boiled. The quantities named give about two gallons of solution.

The negative electrode consists of the article to be gilded. The positive electrode is a plate of fine gold, which constitutes a soluble electrode, and serves to keep the solution at a constant strength. In order that the gilding may be well done the bath must be maintained during the operation at a temperature of from 140 degrees to 150 degrees Fahrenheit.

In a form of apparatus which is very frequently employed the poles of the battery are connected with two metallic rods resting on the top of the cistern which contains the bath. The articles to be gilded are hung from the negative pole or rod. From the positive rod is hung a plate of gold, whose size should be proportional to the total surface of the articles which form the negative electrode.

The same arrangement of the battery and the cistern for holding the bath is applicable for electrotyping and electroplating as well as electrogilding.

The success or failure of the electrolytic process depends very much on the preparation of the copper solution, and on the strength of the battery. A perfectly saturated solution is not so well adapted for the purpose as such a solution diluted with one-fourth part of water. To prevent it from becoming too weak by the deposition of metallic copper, some crystals of the sulphate are added during the process.

The strength of the battery, in relation to the strength of the solution, causes the metals to be deposited either as a black powder, in a crystalline form, or as a flexible plate. The metals are deposited as a black powder when the current of electricity is so strong that hydrogen is evolved from the negative plate in the decomposition cell. The crystalline state occurs when there is no evolution of gas, and no tendency thereto. The regular deposit takes place when the electric current is stronger in relation to the solution than in the last case, but is not sufficiently strong to cause the evolution of gas.

There are various methods of preparing the solution for electroplating and of dissolving the silver, but the cheapest and best is to dissolve the silver in a solution of cyanide of potassium, by the action of a voltaic battery. Dissolve $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces of cyanide of potassium in 1 gallon of water; place one or two flat porous vessels in this solution to within half an inch of the mouth and fill them to the same height with the solution; in these porous vessels place small plates or sheets of copper, and connect them with a zinc terminal of a battery; in the large solution place a sheet or sheets of silver connected with the positive pole of the battery.

This arrangement being made at night, and the power employed being five Daniell's cells, the silver seven inches long by seven in circumference, it will be found in the morning that the solution is ready for use. The strength of the solution recommended is that of one ounce of silver to the gallon. An ounce and a half of silver to one square foot of surface gives an excellent plating. A few drops of bisulphate of carbon confer peculiar qualities upon the silver.

Nickel-plating is now very extensively carried on for the covering of articles hitherto plated with silver. Nickel is very easily deposited, and may be prepared for this purpose by dissolving it in nitric acid, then adding cyanide of potassium to precipitate the metal; after which the precipitate is washed and dissolved by the addition of more cyanide of potassium. Or the nitrate solution may be precipitated by carbonate of potash; this should be well washed, and then dissolved in cyanide of potassium; a proportion of carbonate of potash will be in the solution, which is not found to be detrimental. The sulphate of nickel is also a soluble salt, and the metal is reduced more readily from it than from the nitrate. It is preferable to use the solution as strong as possible.

Nickel forms a compound with the cyanide of potassium on boiling the oxide in a solution of that salt, which takes up a considerable quantity. The acetate of nickel is easily formed, by adding pyro-nitric acid to the oxide of nickel, but it is a bad solution for obtaining reguline or pure metal. The chloride of nickel is formed by dissolving the metal in muriatic acid. It forms a fine green-coloured salt, and a very excellent one for nickel-plating. It may be used with a nickel-positive pole, with one or two Daniell cells.

The Old Park House, near Ashby-de-la-Zouch, with the estate attached to it, was on Friday week sold by auction. The price realized was 19,000*l.*, exclusive of timber and fixtures. The purchaser was Mr. Abney Hastings, to whom part of the ad-

ja-cent land belongs. The greater part of this estate forms what was one of the three parks that in old days surrounded Ashby-de-la-Zouch; Prestop Park and Prior Park being the other two. The two latter were imparked in Edward IV.'s reign by his favourite, Lord Hastings, and are still in the possession of the family, though long disparked. Old Park, however, as its name implies, is considerably older, having been a park of the Zouch family, who gave their name to Ashby; subsequently it, with the manor of Ashby, and the other grand possessions of the Zouches, fell to the Crown, and by Edward IV. was granted to William Lord Hastings. About the commencement of this century it was sold by his descendant, the first Marquis of Hastings, and now again it is incorporated with the family estates.

HOW TO BE ACCEPTABLE.

If we could only impress upon all mankind the fact that a sacred duty which devolves upon each individual is to keep himself or herself pure, sweet, and acceptable to those about them at all times, we should feel that we had accomplished a work of priceless value. Of course we cannot do this, nor can we expect to influence any large proportion of the people, in the direction of that cleanliness which so nearly approximates godliness. But we do stimulate a select few to greater care of themselves, to greater consideration for the tastes and feelings of others, and in this we have a sweet and lasting reward.

Thousands of our young readers will by-and-by reflect that to our teachings they owe something of their good manners, not a little of their good morals, and very much of their good habits, and they will, some day, thank us for our earnestness in their behalf. So we remember that when we preach temperance, and cleanliness, and a life of thoughtful purity, we are teaching our readers an all-important lesson, and one which cannot be too early learned.

There is a great deal of selfishness in the world, and this trait is manifested in nothing more than in personal habits.

FACETIÆ.

"MANNERS."—PARLOUR MAID (to cook): "I knowed that Mr. Smith wasn't no gentleman! Which he never raised his 'at to me when I let 'im out at the 'all door just now!"—*Punch*.

THE NEW MODEL.

SMALL BOY (to Lady Artist): "Mother says as you wants a boy to paint, miss. Is it whitewashing, please?"—*Judy*.

The following notice recently appeared in one of the London papers:—"Mr. Peter Tate has left his home. His wife and children would be thankful to anyone who can give information of his whereabouts. He is subject to fits, and resembles the German Emperor."

CHASTISEMENT MADE DIFFICULT.

"I hear you have been a very naughty boy, Tommy! Go in the corner, directly!"

"All right, mamma darling! Which corner shall it be? And am I to turn my face to the wall, or to the room?"—*Punch*.

THE SLIDING SCALE.

RECTOR'S WIFE (severely): "Tommy Robinson, how is it you don't take off your hat when you meet me?"

TOMMY: "Well, marm, if I take off my hat to you, what be I to do when I meet the parson himself?"—*Pun*.

"Yes, you may come again next Sunday evening, Horace, dear; but"—and she hesitated. "What is it, darling? Have I given you pain?" he asked, as she still remained silent. "You didn't mean to, I'm sure," she responded; "but next time please don't wear one of those collars with the points turning outward; they stick in one's cheek."

NOW, OR NEVER.

(An Allegorical Sketch at Maidenhead.) Emily distinctly refuses to trust herself in the same boat with Frank, unless he consents to row bow to her stroke. What is to be done? To yield might be a fatal precedent for the future; to refuse might be to jeopardize that future altogether!—*Punch*.

A stout lady, with a voice like a saw, yelling out "Meet me once again," or a young gentleman, destitute of wind or ear, screwing, "She wore a wreath of roses," from the power of a flute, would tempt a smile to the face of a Quaker. But both are surpassed by what was witnessed the other day at a great demonstration at Rouen. A French contemporary says of this memorable occasion:—"At that moment the raft fell with redoubled violence, the storm increased to a tempest, and the tent which sheltered us appeared likely to be blown away bodily. The singers, however, persisted, although the water

trickled everywhere from them; their hats were soaked out of shape, their music-books softened into pulp; but still they sang on, and exulted to the last bar of the work." Whether there was an audience at the close to laugh at or applaud them we are not informed.

EVERY-DAY HINTS.

When you meet with an accident turn up a side street and get out of its way.

If you run Bills object to them after they come in. If you run Harrys or Dicks object before they start.

Always keep your temper; it costs less than your poor relations.

Never eat peas with a knife while lamb's only, shilling a pound.

Never go to sleep in your boots while there's a bed or an easy-chair handy.

Study the art of telling lies; the man who can't tell "one is bound to be deceived."

Never say die—do it and be blown to you.—*Fun*.

THE HERMIT'S SUELL.

To a hermit's cell, in a leafy dell,
A youth and a maiden came:

"Oh, hermit dear, we've sought you here—
We've heard of your wondrous fame—

We wish to wed; in the world 'tis said
That a secret you possess.

Which those who hold, with wealth untold
And eternal joys can bless.

Oh, hermit, the charm bestow, we pray,
That can make life pass like a summer's day."

"Oh, youthful pair, you are young and fair!"
When they ceased, the hermit cries:

"You've youth and health, which are bound-
less wealth,

And love—life's peerless prize.
But the charm I know"—here he whispered low

As the magic spell he told—
"Is a happy mind, and that you'll find

Turns everything to gold.
Let love and contentment light your way

And your lives shall pass like a summer's day."
—*Fun*.

CUT TO THE BONE.

Dr. Jones's wife was awakened by a noise in her room, the other night, and when she sat up in bed she saw the doctor standing over the arm-chair in the room. He had a towel tied round one of the legs of the chair, and with a hand saw he was cutting it in half. Mrs. Jones exclaimed:

"Henry, what, in the name of common sense, are you doing?"

"H-a-s-h!" replied the doctor, "you'll wake the patient. You hold the chloroform to his nose while I take his leg off. I'm about half-way through the bone now."

Then Mrs. Jones got out of bed, and shook him and pinched him until he woke. Then he exclaimed:

"How's the patient?"

Mrs. Jones merely said:

"Come to bed, you idiot, and stop hacking up the furniture."

"Gracious, Maria," said the doctor, as he collected his scattered senses, "do you know I thought I was in the hospital sawing off a leg that had a compound fracture? There's a fifty pounds fee gone."

And Jones went to bed, feeling as if he was an injured man at having lost that money.

EFFECTS OF THE TRIAL.

"Cross examinations" are now of daily occurrence in Brooklyn families. For instance, the other day, at the breakfast-table of a well-known resident of Pierrepont Street, the following colloquy took place:

FATHER FAMILIAR (in a stern voice, to a pretty daughter, aged twenty): "Julia, who was that young man that was here last night?"

JULIA (with deliberation): "A friend."

FATHER: "How late did he stay?"

JULIA: "I don't remember."

FATHER: "What is his name?"

JULIA: "I can't recollect."

FATHER: "Where does he live?"

JULIA (quickly): "He's moved."

FATHER (reprovingly): "Don't answer me in that evasive manner. Did he kiss you before leaving?"

YOUNG SISTER (who has been reading the trial, turning to rich old bachelor uncle): "I object; the question is leading."

FATHER: "I insist upon an answer, yes or no, and will put the question in another form. Was there any salutation of the lips?"

JULIA (absently): "My memory fails me in matters of detail, although (with a pause) there might have been something of the kind."

At this point the breakfast ended.

A YOUNG man who was visiting abroad came home Saturday, and in the morning, at breakfast

remarked, as he reached his plate over, "Father, a little of the mixture in the brown dish, if you please, and a small piece of the prepared meat." The old gentleman, who is a plain, matter-of-fact man, replied, as he loaded up the outstretched plate, "We like to have you come a visitin' us, John, but just remember that while you're eatin' here, if you want hash, say so; and if you want sausage, call for sausage."

FAREWELL EXTRAORDINARY.—Rev. Preschlong (fond of promenading between the acts, always mistakes his box, and when he disturbs for the third time in the evening the "tête-à-tête" of a young couple, thinks proper to apologize): "I really beg pardon, but I cannot find my pew!"—*Pun.*

RECIPE FOR A BONNET A-LA-MODE.—First procure a large-sized shape; then butter it well, so as to adhere firmly to the extreme back of the head. Cover it with silk or some light material, and kick it for a mile, taking care to keep it clean during this process. Then take of flowers, feathers, and ribbon each a quarter of a pound, and mix all well together. Add birds, insects, fern-leaves, or grass, according to taste. (If the butter be not sufficiently adhesive, try tulle strings and cobbler's wax.)—*Punch.*

AT THE BOX OFFICE.
The man who always gets a bad seat is a sore trial to the doorkeeper. He is a well-known character there. He comes only on state occasions, when there is a grand rush, and he invariably arrives just as the curtain is about to rise.

He takes his place in the line, calmly awaits his turn to interview the ticket man, and never seems to think that any one else is waiting to be served.

"Have you any good seats, sir?" he begins, and then, in rising irritation: "I never had a good seat in your theatre in my life. Where's your map?"

"We don't sell by the diagram at night—only in the daytime, sir."

"Well, where have you got seats?"

"In various places—parquette, dress-circle, balcony."

"Have you any about six seats from the orchestra on the aisle, end seats?"

"No, sir; but I can give you a few twelve rows back."

"That's too far."

"Can give you third from the front."

"That's too near. Have you any end seats on the side?"

"No."

"What have you in the dress circle?"

"Fourth row in the centre."

"Don't want that. What have you on the side?"

"Third row on the side."

"Which end of the row is nearest or farthest from the stage? Any post in the way?"

"I think not, sir."

"Which side is it on?"

"Either side, sir."

"Can you see all the stage?"

"Nearly all of it, sir."

"Which side is the most acting on, and the principal scenes?"

"All about alike, sir."

"How is it in the balcony? Well, I don't like the balcony. But it's my usual luck. Here, give me the best you have. I'll take one seat."

Meanwhile those in the line are mentally enquiring that slow coach of a treasurer, and wondering why the dence the manager don't discharge him.

I am pretty sure some ticket-sellers here will vouch for this as no fancy sketch. And you may be sure if there is a bad seat handy at such a time it will be slipped over to that man.

Moral—Be amiable and not over anxious with a treasurer, and he will always do the best he can for you.

The hotel clerks and the railway ticket-agents have some queer queries asked them, but give me the theatrical box-office for variety.

KITES AND PIGEONS.

A Dacca paper (not a 'bacca paper) informs us that two wealthy men in India have been spending no end of money in flying kites for wagers, and that the result of the match is to be celebrated by a grand dinner. Our contemporary is wrong if he fancies this custom is new to England. In the city, kite-flying is very prevalent. But this difference exists between the practice in the two countries. The kite-flyer in India gives, the kite-flyer in England takes—and takes a lot too. The paper bird is quite as voracious as his feathered brother, and a great deal more destructive.—*Pun.*

Among Mr. Gladstone's pictures sold on Saturday was one of the late Lord Lyndhurst, for which Mr. Gladstone gave twenty guineas. It was offered by him to a distinguished friend for the like sum, but

he declined it. It was sold again by Messrs. Christie for 131 13s., and has again been sold by the purchaser for 115 guineas to five Tory members, with whose joint purse it was bought, and by them handed over to Mr. Disraeli, who had expressed a wish to possess it.

"**THE SAARDAM**" portrait of Peter the Great—for which he was sitting at the time of the visit of Marlborough to the house of Myrhaer Calp, the ship-builder of Saardam, in 1697, and which has been missing from Russia for twenty-four or five years, has been recovered in London by Captain W. H. Fenton-Saunders. Both painting and frame were uninjured, and, on being cleaned, this celebrated portrait was found to be in a state of perfect preservation.

A QUEER GIFT.

A LACK of common sense, I know,
My choice of gifts discloses;
Instead of giving bread and beef,
To give a paper roses.

But then, I think, for her poor soul
All summer days are over;
And June meant roses long ago,
And grass and birds and lover.

She told me of the homestead old,
Now passed to others' keeping;
Where sweet acacias bloomed above,
And fragrant vines were creeping.

She told me, too, how roses red
Grew sweet in sunshine mellow,
And gathered crimson kirkies close
About their hearts so yellow.

She said, with a touch of faded hair,
"When I was young I wore 'em,
O' Sunday's always; Roger Lee
Set out the bush that bore 'em."

Somebody else will give her beef,
Some one who ne'er supposes,
That weak and old and near the end,
She still might care for roses.

So I will steal up to her bed,
And while she dreams and dozes,
I'll leave upon the shabby bed
These great full-hearted roses.

And from her dreams of auld lang syne
Their summer breath shall wake her,
How it will cheer the weary day
To find June won't forsake her.

And if, when I grow old and weak,
Grim want its thin hand closes,
I hope somebody else will bring
To me, not beef, but roses. E. L.

GEMS.

A valuable man shows his spirit by gentle words and resolute actions; he is neither hot nor timid.

FRIENDSHIP is the medicine for all misfortunes, but ingratitude dries up the fountain of all goodness.

MAKE no more vows to perform this or that; it shows no great strength, and makes thee ride behind thyself.

PROSPERITY seems to be scarcely safe, unless it be mixed with a little adversity.

Idlers cannot even find time to be idle, or the indolent to be at leisure. We must be always doing or suffering.

He who surpasses or subdues mankind must look down on the hate of those below.

THE Jardin d'Acclimation has just received a great zoological rarity from South America. This is a living tapir, a perfect specimen, that arrived there a short while since in good health and spirits. A great number daily visit the garden out of curiosity to see the newly-arrived pachyderm, of which a living specimen has never before been seen in Europe.

Our distinguished Oriental visitor, the Sultan of Zanzibar, continues to enjoy excellent health, in spite of the great extremes of temperature which have taken place since his arrival in England. The only inconvenience His Highness suffers is from being made to walk about a good deal more than he is accustomed to do in the lethargic regions of Zanzibar. Those who are brought into contact with him are favourably impressed with his intelligence and the mildness of his manner.

HOUSEHOLD GODS.—The permanent objects with which a man surrounds himself and his family, are certain to exert a powerful influence upon their taste

and culture. You cannot furnish your son or your daughter with cheap-looking, ill-constructed furniture without impairing his or her taste and lowering the mental and moral tone. Somebody affirms that a badly-shaped sofa, a rickety table or a broken chair, is sufficient to demoralize any observing person in one year.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

A TOOTHACHE REMEDY.—Bicarbonate of soda, a teaspoonful in a tumbler of water and a mouthful of the solution held in contact with the "raging tooth," will sometimes give immediate relief. Or, if there is a cavity moisten a little of the soda with a drop or two of laudanum and work the mixture into a paste of proper consistence and then "plug" the tooth.

RHEUMATIC FEVER.—Wonderful cures of this painful malady are reported to us on good authority, by the employment of the common artichoke, the cynara of the botanist. The leaves are used in an infusion, which is given copiously at any stage of the fever. They have to be gathered in their prime, just before the vegetable is ripe enough to eat. If left until the cone is fit for cooking purposes the virtue of the leaves will have departed.

STATISTICS.

STATISTICS OF HER MAJESTY'S WHEREABOUTS LAST YEAR.—The popular notion that the queen neglects her English subjects by undue partiality for sojourning in Scotland is sufficiently disproved by the statistics of Her Majesty's whereabouts during the year of her reign which was completed on Sunday, the 20th ult. The 365 days intervening between June 21 (morning), 1874, and June 20 (evening), 1875, were divided by the queen amongst the royal residences thus: 130 days were spent at Osborne House, 93 days at Windsor Castle, 124 days at Balmoral Castle, 9 days at Buckingham Palace, five days at "The Cottage" at the Glasall Shell, and about three days (a little over) in the saloon of the royal train travelling between Balmoral and the South of England. It may be gathered from these figures—totally unofficial ones, by the way—that Her Majesty during the 38th year of her reign dwelt 129 days amongst her North British subjects and 233 days amongst her English subjects. In other words, the queen spent 104 days more in England than she did in Scotland. Again, although there is a royal residence in the Scottish capital—Holyrood Palace—it was not tenanted by Her Majesty even a single day of the year in question. Clarendon was also unvisited.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE Earl of Charleville died at Brighton on Tuesday, in his forty-sixth year.

A new telegraphic news company is appearing; it is entitled the Maclean's Telegrams. Like Reuters, it will supply news to the papers.

HAN MAJESTY has placed at the disposal of Mrs. Kingsley, the widow of the late Rev. Canon Kingsley, the first suite of apartments that may become vacant in Hampton Court Palace.

A COPY of the original edition of Burns's poems, printed in Kilmarnock, has just been sold in London for 34s., the largest price yet obtained for any copy of the now rare Kilmarnock edition.

THE thirty-seventh anniversary of Her Majesty's coronation, which took place in Westminster Abbey on the 23rd of June, 1838. It was celebrated in the customary way, both in London and at Windsor.

DR. AND MRS. HALLOCK, leading advocates of the woman suffrage question in the United States, have arrived in London. Mrs. Hallock is mother of the graceful actresses, Misses Ella and Linda Dietz.

THE WAGES OF ART.—It is well known that opera singers receive large sums for their services, and perhaps one of the actual figures taken at random may prove interesting. Madame Patti receives 200l. for each night she sings at the opera.

THE Emperor Ferdinand, uncle of the Emperor Francis Joseph, died at Prague at a quarter to four on the afternoon of the 29th June, of disease of the lungs, aged 82. The Emperor Ferdinand was the eldest son of the Emperor Francis I. He was born on the 19th April, 1793, and succeeded his father on the 2nd of March, 1835. He was crowned King of Hungary September 28, 1830, King of Bohemia September 7, 1836, and King of Lombardy and Venice September 6, 1838. He abdicated in favour of his nephew, the present Emperor of Austria, on the 2nd, of September, 1848.

